# AFP most corrupt–Pulse

## Highly toxic water seeping from damaged nuke reactor

TOKYO—Highly contaminated water is escaping a damaged reactor at the crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station in Japan and may soon leak into the ocean, the country's nuclear regulator warned on Monday.

The discovery raises the danger of further radiation leaks at the stricken power plant and also poses a further setback to efforts to contain the nuclear contamination crisis as tense government officials and firefighters in protective suits have been battling to control the six-reactor Fukushima

(more on A3)

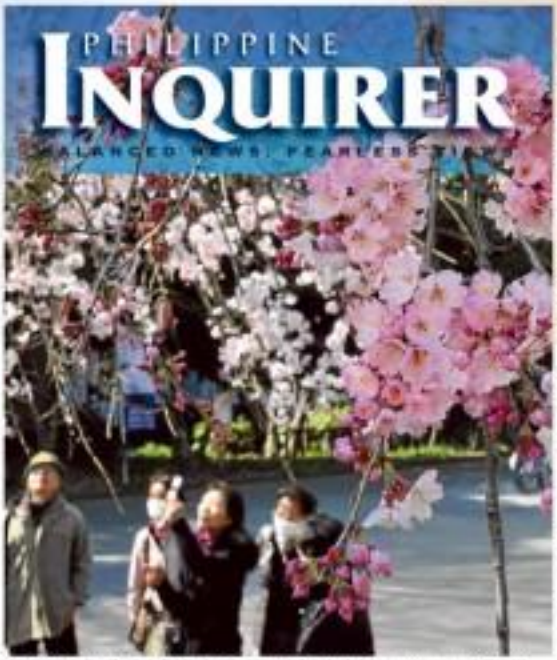

**WHAT'S INSIDE**

**METRO** / A21
**'Ondoy'** victim wins ₱23M in Megalotto

**WORLD** / A24
**Libya** rebels push toward Tripoli

**ENTERTAINMENT** / D1
**Small** clubs keep local music scene alive

**NEWS** / A2
**BF** depositors start getting money back


A CERTAIN GLADNESS People stroll in Ueno Park in Tokyo on Monday as the ordinary blossom season opens. This year the excitement has been overshadowed by the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami that devastated northeastern Japan. AFP

## PNP stays No. 2 on list of grafters

CALL IT the George Rabusa and Heidi Mendoza effect.

Their allegations of massive corruption in the Armed Forces of the Philippines at congressional hearings covered live by the broadcast media have turned the military into the most corrupt government agency in the eyes of the public, results of the latest survey by Pulse Asia show.

The Philippine National Police ranked second to the AFP among the agencies considered the most corrupt. (See table on Page A6.)

The AFP dislodged the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH), long considered the flagship of corruption, Pulse Asia said yesterday.

Pulse Asia said 69 percent of adult Filipinos considered the military the most corrupt government agency, up from just 8 percent in February 2009.

The survey, conducted from Feb. 24 to March 6, covered 1,200 representative adults. It had a margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr., the AFP chief of staff, said he saw the survey results as a challenge for him to

(more on A6)

# Lacson says he was a fugitive from injustice

*Ping recounts life on the run; Leila unamused*

By Christian V. Esguerra and Nikko Dizon

HE ALWAYS kept his head down, ignored people who greeted him and refused to see his "benefactors" to avoid capture. And he always made sure he was several steps ahead of his pursuers.

That was how Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson—a fugitive for more than a year—described yesterday the pressure he said he took while living the life of a man on the run.

And he kept moving from one place to another, he said.

(more on A4)

LIFE ON THE LAM Sen. Panfilo Lacson faces the media as the Senate allowed more than one year as a fugitive from the law. But his reappearance is not welcome news to members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption who picketed the Court of Appeals on Monday.

By Christian V. Esguerra

BACK IN the limelight after being in the shadows for over a year, Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson on yesterday portrayed himself as a "fugitive from injustice" and denied he had hammered out a deal with the Aquino administration so he could return home.

In a press conference two days after he flew home unannounced from Hong Kong, Lacson was pressed on his grievances against the administration, saying that as one point he had felt so desperate in his fight for survival over the pressure generated.

Lacson, who threw his support behind President Aquino in last year's presidential election, lamented that the supposed political alliance between him and the new leadership was only "in the papers."

Lacson dipped out of the

(LACSON, A4)

*Fast car slows down P-Noy rating–SWS*

THE FAST CAR that somehow slowed down the performance rating.

The fallout from chasing a Porsche has apparently dragged down President Aquino's rating, results of a survey by Social Weather Stations (SWS) showed.

His net satisfaction rating took a steep drop from +64 in November last year to +51 in early March.

The survey, conducted on March 4 to 7 and first published in BusinessWorld, found that out of

(FAST CARS, A4)

# Flight was 'blatant disrespect of rule of law'

By Nikko Dizon

ANTICRIME crusader Jimmy Jimenez yesterday said it provided him more fire. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson could still face the public after displaying a "blatant disrespect of the rule of law" when he went into hiding to elude a warrant of arrest issued by the Manila Regional Trial Court as an accused in the Dimer Corfino double-murder case.

Jimenez, cofounder of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption (VACC), and members of the group rallied outside the Court of Appeals to protest the dismissal of the charges against Lacson for insufficient evidence.

"Instead of placing himself in the jurisdiction of the court and face the double murder charge leveled against him, the senator fled the country as soon as he sensed his impending arrest," Jimenez said in a statement.

"Even before the warrant of arrest was is-

(more on A4)

EX-PRES LANG Finance Secretary Cesar V. Purisima (sa helmet?) hitches a ride with a motorcycle cop to beat heavy traffic along Ortigas Avenue in Mandaluyong and make it to a meeting with President Aquino at the Asian Development Bank.

# Kin offer tsunami of prayers to stay execution of 3 Pinoys

By Jerry E. Esplanada

RELATIVES and sympathizers of three Filipinos scheduled to be executed on Wednesday by the Chinese government for heroin smuggling in Kunming City are offering a tsunami of prayers through vigils organized there.

The fate of Sally Villanueva, 31, Elias, both female, 36, and Ramon Credo, 42, has been sealed after China turned down the Philippine government's final plea for an other—perhaps permanent—stay of execution.

Aquino still is continuously held across the country by the three Filipinos and by the Chinese government to still change its mind, Fr. Edwin Corros, executive secretary of the Episcopal Commission for Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People (ECMI), said over Church-run Radio Veritas.

The commission is under the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines.

(KIN OFFER, A11)

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

**6/42**
1 2nd 28 17
2nd 10 15
3rd 29 5

**SUERTRES**
1 1st 1 3 1
2nd 9 2 0
3rd 4 8 4

**FOUR DIGIT** Swertres
1 4 2 0

**MEGALOTTO 6/45**
1 5 6 15 32 45
P4,500,000.00

**LOTTO 6/49 GRAND LOTTO**
1 16 43 45 46 55
P71,220,470.40

LOTTO 7/49 | Pcso OMNILOTTO, results for MAY. PCSO Website

## BF depositors start getting money back

THE PHILBITPOC Deposit Insurance Corp (PDIC) said it began yesterday paying small deposits to all Banco Filipino (BF) Savings and Mortgage Bank through postal money orders.

It said the measure is part of claims of bigger depositors of the publicized savings bank will soon follow.

Small depositors are those with deposits of ₱5,000 and less. Those depositors, according to they don't have outstanding loans with the bank and as long as they have complete addresses recorded with the bank, need not file deposit insurance claims.

Their payments will be delivered through postal money orders (PDIC said.

The former said small deposit accounts comprised 33 percent of the total deposits in BF.

Those with deposits of more than ₱5,000 need to file deposit insurance claims with PDIC.

In a statement, PDIC executive vice president Cristina Ortega said PDIC would start paying claims of above ₱5,000 by mid-July.

"The speed of payouts depends on the completeness and accuracy of records submitted over by BF to PDIC, the completeness of documents submitted by claimants, as well as the volume of deposit accounts to be examined," Ortega said.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas placed BF under receivership after it received reports that the bank had failed to service withdrawals of depositors on March 16.

BF has contested the decision, insisting it has sufficient assets and is not insolvent. The bank said it was asking for an emergency loan from the BSP to temporarily help address its being short of cash.

The BSP, however, said its Monetary board decided to place the bank under receivership because it believed it could no longer be rescued.

Michaela V. Bunoz

# Palace sees lower growth rate due to int'l troubles

THE GOVERNMENT'S growth target this year of 7 to 8 percent may be more difficult to achieve after the disaster in Japan and the turmoil in North Africa and the Middle East, a presidential communications secretary said.

"When we came up with the 7 to 8 percent economic growth target, we were not expecting the political violence in the Middle East and the earthquake and tsunami in Japan," Ricky Carandang said on Sunday.

"I would have to admit it would be more challenging to attain the target given these developments," he said.

On Wednesday, Economic Planning Secretary Cayetano Paderanga said the government may lower this year's growth target range of 7 to 8 percent, which was above the estimates of 5 percent growth by most analysts as well as the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.

Governor Amando Tetangco of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said last week that the original 7-8 percent growth "may still a "fighting target" but that the lower range of 5 to 6 percent was being taken into account.

Tetangco said the lower range was more realistic because of the unfavorable factors outside the country that might affect growth.

Officials have said they need more time to assess the impact of a potential slowdown in trade as well as developmental loans from this city-stricken Japan, the Philippines' major trading partners, and reduced remittances from Filipinos working in the Middle East and North Africa.

Carandang said yesterday the government would review the growth targets for the Philippine economy.

Emerging from a Cabinet meeting presided over by President Aquino, Carandang told reporters that the National Economic and Development Authority Director found presented the Philippine Development Plan of the Aquino administration to the next six years.

Carandang said Paderanga, also Socio-Economic Planning secretary, told him later that he had ordered a "review of the growth targets" in the wake of the earthquake, tsunami and nuclear emergency in Japan, and troubles in the Middle East and North Africa that resulted in thousands of Filipino workers returning home.

"How (Neda) should be able to determine this in the next week or two," Carandang said.

He said it was possible there would be "minor revisions" of the growth targets because the government was expecting fewer remittances from workers and lower exports from Japan in the short term.

"Remittances from around 10 million OFWs (overseas—about one-tenth of the population...are a key support of the peso and a driver of consumption in the Philippine economy which posted 7.3 percent growth in 2010, its fastest increase than three decades.

Japan's disaster may be negative for the Philippine economy in the short-term, but the country should benefit from its Asian neighbor's massive reconstruction drive, central bank officials said last week.

"Over time, as the efforts to reconstruct and rehabilitate the Japanese economy proceed, higher demand will contribute to a more resilient, dynamic economy and that will also have some favorable impact on the emerging markets, including the Philippines," BSP Deputy Governor Diwa Guinigundo said. With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Reuters

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ABOVE are sketches of three of the four suspects in the killing of broadcaster Len Sumera. The fourth suspect is a woman.

## Cops release sketches of Sumera slay suspects; P-Noy urged to act

By Kristine Felisse Marquez and Gil Cabacungan

POLICE released yesterday composite sided sketches of the faces of three of the four suspects in the killing of radio broadcaster Marlina "Len" Sumera in Malabon City last week.

As police are nowhere near an arrest, several urban groups headed by the militant Bayang Ayaw-sang Mahal sa mga Chayan's called on President Aquino to "walk the talk" and not make "mere rhetorical statements" in tackling extrajudicial killings.

Bayan spokesperson Neida Quiza noted in a statement that Sumera was the second victim of an extrajudicial killing in Metro Manila under the Aquino administration. He said the first was Antonio Heinz, campaign officer of an urban group who was gunned down in his home in Navotas early this month.

"The killings of Sumera and Heinz ... under P-Noy is indeed alarming for those were noted on issues of land and the people's right to housing," Quiza said. "We demand that P-Noy act immediately to resolve these grotesque killings, enable some justice to Sumera and his niece and put the perpetrators and masterminds behind bars."

Sumera, 43, was shot at close range in the nape by a gunman a few meters from his house in Barangay Hulo on March 24. She was declared dead on arrival at Tolentino General Hospital.

The gunman, police said, had three accomplices, one of them a woman.

Chief Supt. Edgardo Ladao, Northern Police District (NPD) director, presided to the media individual sketches of the gunman and two accomplices.

The gunman was described as 20 to 21 years old, of medium build and dark complexion and standing 1.57 meters (5'2") to 1.6 meters (5'3") tall. His weight was estimated at between 60 and 65 kilograms.

Another suspect who raised the area prior to the killing was said to be between 40 and 50 years, of medium build and fair complexion, and about the same height as the suspected gunman. His weight was estimated at between 75 and 80 kilograms.

The third male suspect who walked alongside the gunman as he approached Sumera was described as about 30 to 35 years old, weighing 60 kg to 65 and of fair complexion and medium build.

Supt. Sio Gatarela, Northern Police District public information officer, said the sketches were based on descriptions given by several witnesses. The sketch of the woman was not completed since no one came forward to provide a description.

Supt. Filemon Bocbocanda, head of the NPD crime lab, said that the bullet that killed Sumera could have come from a 9-mm pistol, judging from the hole it created on her body.

Police reiterated that the killing was related to a land dispute. Gatacelo said the police had invited "for interview" all members of the Kapitbahayang Samahan sa Maayelo (Katama), including its president, Emma Bogal.

Katama is the lone homeowners' association in Barangay Maayelo and is opposed to a government-initiated housing project on a 4.2-hectare track. The project is supported by Sumera's Alliance Homeowners Associations and was urban.

Also yesterday, Malabon City Rep. Josephine Lacson-Noel chipped in ₱250,000 to raise the bounty on Sumera's assassin.

This brings to ₱450,000 the total reward money for the arrest of the individual or group behind the Sumera killing, after Malabon City Mayor Tito Oreta donated ₱150,000 and the National Press Club added ₱50,000.

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# Workers find skeletons at former war site

MANILA, Philippines — Workers digging a swimming pool construction site stumbled on a mass grave containing 14 skeletons believed to be prisoners of war from the Japanese occupation in World War II, police said Tuesday.

Local police cordoned off the area in Noveliches, Batangas, shortly after the workers discovered the remains Friday.

Further investigation disclosed the site was a Japanese garrison during World War II and the residents here believe the excavated skeletal remains were victims of wars' police said in a statement.

A forensic investigation was being carried out to determine the nationalities of the victims, although they are believed to be Filipinos, police said.

The Philippines came under Japanese military control in 1942 during World War II. The three-year occupation period is considered one of the darkest times for the country.

Thousands of Filipino and American soldiers died during the occupation, many of them starved to death in Japanese garrisons around the country, historic records show.

US General Douglas MacArthur, supreme commander of allied forces in the Southwest Pacific, eventually returned to retake control of large parts of the Philippines until Japan formally surrendered in 1945. AFP

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## Remove Blemishes And Dark Spots:

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There is no question that effortlessly clear skin is more equated with youth. If we recall what our skin looked like years ago, we will most likely come up with a picture of skin that is clearer, softer and smoother. In a word, flawless.

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Numerous factors continually affect the skin as it matures, ranging from external ones (such as sun exposure and pollutants) to the natural aging process. Over time, as the skin is exposed to various elements, it may acquire blemishes. Dark spots, acne scars and other forms of pigmentation are examples of some imperfections the skin may experience as a result of aging.

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# Binay off to check on OFWs in Qatar, Saudi Arabia

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By Jerry E. Esplanada

VICE President Jejomar Binay, also the Presidential Adviser on Overseas Filipino Workers' (OFWs) Concerns, will leave today for Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Binay will be in Doha until March 31. He will proceed to Riyadh on April 1.

In the two Middle East countries, which host more than two million OFWs, Binay plans to "discuss labor and economic issues and look into the conditions of Filipino migrant workers."

"It is in the best interests of the Philippines and the two countries to reach common ground on issues affecting Filipino workers," Binay said in a statement.

In the Saudi capital, he will discuss with Saudi officials the Riyadh Embassy's reported decision to halt the deployment of foreign domestic helpers to the Middle East kingdom.

"Our government is willing to dialogue with the government of Saudi Arabia to discuss their concerns, as well as our position on bilateral labor issues," said Binay.

Binay also plans to "extend the appreciation of the Philippine government for the royal pardon given to September last year by Saudi King Abdullah to Filipinos languishing in various jails for minor offenses."

He expressed hope that "this (a) reflects well again show his benevolence so that our kababayans may be allowed to rejoin their families in the Philippines."

Earlier, Foreign Assistant Secretary J. Eduardo Malaya, also the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) spokesperson, said the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh had submitted the names of over 600 Filipinos detained in various Saudi jails for deliberation in the royal pardon.

In Saudi Arabia, Binay is also set to meet with members of the Filipino community including "ranaways" who are currently housed at the Labay holding center run by the Department of Labor and Employment and the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration.

"President Aquino is deeply concerned about the welfare of our OFWs. During my visit to Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates from Feb. 23 to March 3, our OFWs raised several concerns and I have relayed all of these to the President. He has directed the government agencies concerned to act on these concerns. His visit to Saudi Arabia will not be complete without the chance to interact with our fellow Filipinos," he said.

Asked if Binay would call on King Abdullah, Jose Salgado, the Vice President's media affairs, told the Inquirer it would be "conditioned by the embassy upon Binay's arrival in Riyadh."

"The embassy has already sent a note verbale to the Saudi ministry of foreign affairs," said Salgado.

Early this month, Binay expressed disappointment over the last-minute cancellation of his trip to Saudi Arabia.

According to Salgado, "the Philippine Embassy was unable to schedule an audience with (the Saudi king) ... So we were also given to Vice President Binay."

# Saudi stops hiring PH domestics

By Philip C. Kimco

SAUDI ARABIA said it would stop the processing of employment contracts for Filipino household service workers (HSWs) until further notice, Carlos Cao Jr., Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) chief, said yesterday.

The Saudi Ministry of Foreign Affairs relayed this information in a note verbale to the Philippine Embassy in Riyadh on March 12.

According to government industry officials, the ban was connected to the new law Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act which requires prior ex-deployment a Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) certification that the rights of domestic helpers would be adequately protected.

"There was a note verbale from the Saudi Foreign Ministry saying that they will no longer cooperate in the verification of contracts," Cao said in an interview.

The government "is studying the matter very carefully" because it does not want the issue to affect an estimated 1.5 million overseas Filipino workers in the kingdom, he said.

"We will respond on the same verbale and there is now an interdepartmental policy study being done. It is a very sensitive matter. We do not want to add fuel to the fire," he added.

Cao said that as of November 2010, there were 303,656 Filipino HSWs with an estimated 9,000 DFA-accredited recruiters deployed to Saudi Arabia last year.

He said officials from the DFA and the DOLE were meeting to come out with a "unified position" on how to replace the note verbale.

"We can already notice that there is a certain degree of slowdown in the deployments of HSWs but as a matter of policy we are still processing this," Cao said.

A labor official, who requested anonymity, said the Saudi ban might have been caused by the media's DFA certification on rights protection.

Under the new Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act, OFWs can be sent only to countries where their rights are protected.

The DFA is tasked to certify which countries were data-criteria. This certification will then have to be approved by the POEA governing board.

Cao said of the DFA had issued a certification Saudi Arabia but has declined to say if this included domestic helpers, adding only that POEA was asking for "further clarification" from the DFA.

Recruitment industry consultant Emmanuel Imbasi said the certification issue was one of the reasons behind the Saudi ban.

# 22 more OFWs home from Libya

ANOTHER 22 overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) have arrived from Libya, bringing to 914 the number of OFWs who returned home from the war-torn North African country, according to the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (Owwa).

The OFWs arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport aboard two commercial flights from Libya.

Owwa personnel who met them at the airport offered them lodgings at the agency's halfway house on J. S. Hardiman Street, Pasay City. They will also each be given a financial grant of P10,000.

Owwa head Carmelita Dimzon said many Filipino workers were still in the Middle East awaiting flights to Manila.

It was not clear how many others made it out of Libya had their own, he said, as earlier reported that a number of them decided to stay at their hospital posts.

On Sunday, 36 more Filipinos were brought across the Libyan border with Egypt, bringing to 138 the total batch of Filipinos to avail of loans provided by the Philippine embassy there.

The latest batch of evacuees all came from the eastern Libyan city of Benghazi, said embassy personnel to Espela.

As the border town of As-Sallum, they were "assisted by a team from the Philippine Embassy in Cairo that was stationed at the border area," the statement said.

Foreign Secretary Alberto del Rosario earlier advised OFWs there to leave, stating that the situation had become dangerous.

According to Foreign Assistant Secretary J. Eduardo Malaya, also DFA spokesperson, "the bulk of our nationals have already exited Libya." — Jerry E. Esplanada

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# AFP most corrupt gov't agency–Pulse Asia

From page A1

work more to prove reforms in the military and to tell the public about them.

"It would seem that the perception of the public is that the AFP is corrupt. But we'd like to look at this issue as a challenge, a motivation for the entire institution to have an aggressive step toward reforming the Armed Forces particularly in the area of financial management and procurement," said Ghazi, who assumed office on March 7 amid the "palasan" (sandal) gift scandal.

### High public awareness

The survey found that eight in every 10 Filipinos (80 percent) said they were aware of military corruption, particularly by the revelations made by Baleva, military budget officer from 2000 to 2002, about "ghost" and "padded" gifts in high-ranking military officials.

"Considerable to overwhelming majorities" across geographic areas (83 percent to 96 percent) and socioeconomic groupings (71 percent to 95 percent) were aware of these allegations, Pulse Asia said in a statement.

Starting several times before the former Mine ribbon committee meeting Jan. 27, Baleva said he raised money for a military slush fund and gave these AFP chiefs of staff during his stint as budget officer: Gen. Efren Abu (P50 million), Gen. Hermogenes Esperon (P50 million), Navy Admiral Ernesto Abella (P50 million), Air Force Gen. Jose Reynaldo Tamayo (P50 million), Gen. Alexander Yano (P50 million), Gen. Victor Ibrado (P50 million), Gen. Roy Kyamko (P50 million), Gen. Roy Cimatu (P50 million), Gen. Dionisio Santiago (P50 million), Gen. Benjamin Dolorfino (P50 million), Gen. Generoso Senga (P50 million), Gen. Romeo Tolentino (P50 million), Gen. Diomedio Villanueva (P50 million), Gen. Ruben Rafael (P50 million), Gen. Delfin Bangit (P50 million), Gen. Ariel Bueno (P50 million), Gen. Jaime de los Santos (P50 million), Gen. Pedro Cabuay (P50 million), Gen. Rodolfo Garcia (P50 million), Gen. Jose Calimlim (P50 million), Gen. Emmanuel Teodosio (P50 million), Gen. Ricardo David (P50 million), Gen. Juanito Ochoco

# Planes will fly, PAL assures public

PHILIPPINE Airlines (PAL) yesterday assured the public that contingency measures were in place so long as employees flying aircraft would not ground crew would go on strike.

PAL spokesperson Cielo Villaluna said flights would continue "on schedule" while all tickets, sales and airport offices would remain open even if the PAL Employees Association (Palea) goes on strike.

"Our airlines is not only for us as well as supervisors and even management are set on standby to ensure that our operations are not disrupted in case Palea members walk out," Villaluna said in a statement.

She said that Palea represented only a fraction of PAL's 7,000-strong work force. The union head said that it could go on strike as early as April 2.

Villaluna warned that a strike, if declared illegal by the authorities, could lead to the forfeiture of the striking workers' benefits, "including those ordered by the Office of the President."

PAL noted the warning not submitted yesterday its counter-proposal, which included a wage increase—in a three-year collective bargaining agreement (CBA) with Palea.

"In good faith, PAL management fulfilled its commitment to submit today's counter-proposal, proof of management's sincerity and willingness to open negotiations with Palea," said Jose S.L. Ephrosen, PAL vice president for human resources.

"The amounts of P700 for the 1st year, P1,000 for the 2nd year and another P1,500 for the 3rd year are what management believes the company can afford at this time, given the strong of passenger losses suffered by PAL since 2008," he said, referring to a peso hike for the workers.

On Friday, Mediacting upheld the decision of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) allowing PAL to outsource thirty non-core contracts.

The national flag carrier noted that it was Palea that had sought the President's intervention, "and when the decision did not favor them, the union rejects the decision even the additional benefits granted to them."

Earlier, PAL president Jaime J. Bautista said the outcome of Mediacting's resolution on the spin-off issue "was expected on part on the said PAL-Palea CBA."

In an indignation rally on Monday, yesterday Palea members burdened President Aquino and Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa for the Palace decision to uphold the PAL outsourcing plan, saying that would lead to the loss of jobs of 2,600 PAL employees.

"In the decision that the present Ochoa signed (also the civil loss of this government is. It is DNL-owned Lucio Tan, not the Filipino people. This decision ends the myth of Pinoy Pinoy ang loss ko obispo," said Sonny Silvera, Palea president and vice dean of the Sky Info ng Mediacting (DNL).

Silvera said some 200 Palea members and supporters heard Mediacting's anti-contractualization coalition Kmtsn assembled at Monumento in Caloocan and then marched on Mendiola.

They carried placards and streamers saying "Lucio Tan, No. 2 richest Filipino, No. 1 sweatshop," "Stop PAL outsourcing," "Stop cutting, stop bigong manoco ka si Ochoa? Pabili Malacanang's decision, sell Ochoa from a new mansion," and "Si Lucio Tan ang bumaba, Pinoy (Lucio Tan is my boss, Pinoy)."

Palea said it had started the 6-month-ban to strike announcement notice since the crippling 1998 PAL work shutdown.

The ban on a strike at PAL ends on April 1, seven days after Palea submitted the results of the strike vote. An overwhelming 91 percent of Palea members who participated in the strike poll voted yes compared to the 80 percent yes in the strike vote conducted last November.

"In drafting the decision in the SOle president, Ochoa underestimated the Constitution. It is unconstitutional and the PAL-Palea CBA which will guaranteed job security and the right to bargain of workers," Silvera said.

"In the decision, Ochoa found utterly nothing wrong in PAL's outsourcing/contracting scheme and he turned a blind eye to all the evidence on PAL's profitable operations. We will not be surprised if a secret gives mansion is the reason behind this decision," he added.

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# Lacson says he was a fugitive from injustice

From page A1

country really in 2010 shortly before a Manila judge ordered his arrest for his alleged role in the twin murders of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and Dacer's driver Emmanuel Corbito in 2000.

The Court of Appeals later threw out the charges against him.

### No help

Lacson denied getting any help from the Philippine National Police—which he headed before—or from National Bureau of Investigation director Magtanggol Gatdula, his subordinate at the defunct Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force.

"They didn't go easy on me, I see well you that," he said, adding that he never even felt "it would be payback time."

I was a fugitive from injustice... for 11 months. I lived the life of a prisoner outside a prison cell... I had only one aim in life: to see get caught."

### Miscarriage of justice

In a prepared statement before the media questions, Lacson said that "there were frequent moments that I felt the presence... not had never stopped even after a new administration [had] taken power [in mid-2010]."

"All I was asking for is a fair share of justice, correct its miscarriage and take the excesses of the past regime," he added.

Lacson said that an entire organization, he says "messages" to Malacañang asking: "Don't treat me like I was still in the old regime."

He was particularly incensed that Justice Secretary Leila de Lima—at one point—stuck to the order for him to be captured despite a Court of Appeals ruling nullifying the arrest warrant against him.

### 'Waver, never'

Lacson categorically denied he had forged a deal with De Pabayo that led to his being cleared of criminal charges, presumably in exchange for his vote in favor of ousting Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez in the forthcoming Senate impeachment trial.

"Never, never," he said. "There's no deal... I'm not a shameless judge who would vote for the (ouster) of Ombudsman Gutierrez. That much I can assure you," he said.

"I will be guided by evidence... because I myself was a victim of the disregard of rules of evidence."

Lacson's return brought to 23 the number of senators in the 24-seat chamber. Prosecutors would need 16 votes to convict Gutierrez in the impeachment trial set to begin in May.

Lacson said he would remain an "independent" in the Senate, maintaining he would never ally himself with any administration "stealing from the public coffers."

### Life in hiding

"It's said in the papers that I'm an ally but I don't feel it," he said. "I'm not saying that I'm not an ally anymore... So far, I can tell you that based on what I read and hear, [the administration], especially President Aquino, is serious against corruption."

At one point during his life as a fugitive, Lacson said that "I was ready to spend the rest of my life in hiding." He added: "I was ready not to see my family again."

Despite his compliance, the senator said he had buried no ill feelings against President Aquino or his Executive Secretary Paquito Ochoa Jr.

"What saddened him, he said, was the decision to close down his Senate office and suspend his staff's salaries because he could not sign the paperwork.

"I can tell you none I owed my ayes out, not for me, but for my staff. Why did they have to be dragged into this?" he said.

### Forgive and forget

Now cleared of the murder charges, at least, by the Court of Appeals, Lacson said he was torn between "forgiving those who persecuted me" and "seeking justice through the legal process."

"But I'm more inclined to just forgive and forget," he said. But he added that "I'm not saying that I wouldn't do [the other thing] because as I go on with my duties as a senator for the rest of my term, I also have the obligation, not just for myself, but also for our people."

Lacson said he was willing to cooperate with the family of Dacer as long as he would not be presented by Pedro "Pete" Dacer and said with families of victims in seeking justice for their loved ones," he said.

He asked the Dacers to "open their eyes" and not get "blatant" with the idea that he was the one behind the 2000 murders.

### Friend or foe?

Wednesday denied it was persecuting Lacson.

Told about Lacson's complaint that he sometimes left personnel even by the Aquino administration as part of his conspiracy against De Lima, Gatdula mysterious Secretary Ricky Carandang said the justice secretary had already said she was just following the legal process in pursuing the Dacer-Corbito case.

Carandang told reporters De Lima's actions would belie speculation that the Palace had a hand in the return of the senator.

He said it was public knowledge that the Aquino administration was not always on good terms with the judiciary.

"It's not like we have the power to influence the judiciary. We've had many disagreements with the judiciary and I think most of the public believes that the judiciary is independent—that's putting it mildly," Carandang said.

Asked whether Lacson was a friend or foe of Mr. Aquino, Carandang said he knows the senator never gamed friends when they were both in the Senate, and added: "I don't see any reason why that has changed."

He also said the President had told him Lacson had not sent any message on a possible pre-emptive bail for himself. He said Mr. Aquino would never "wish any senator who wants to speak to him." With reports from Christina O. Ascasiba

CA PROTEST Members of the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption picket the Court of Appeals on Monday to protest its ruling lifting the warrants of arrest against Sen. Panfilo Lacson.

# Flight was 'blatant disrespect of rule of law'

From page A1

stood, he scampered to arms for right hand in hide instead of shooting himself of the charges," he added.

"A boggley my mind why the senator could still trained the guts to leave the country after having displayed such a blatant disrespect of the rule of law, running from the court and to the process, abandoning post haste his Senate duties."

### Answers said Lacson's flight

Iloilo Justice was an example that we should not be bothered with "totally unbecoming" of a senator.

"No example of the lawmaker being the lawbreaker—hiding from the law then reappearing at will when the court is clear," he said.

Lacson has claimed that he hurriedly left the country because the previous administration of President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo had been harassing him for espousing corruption cases purportedly involving her and her husband.

Jimenez described the claim as a "hollow excuse," saying that the senator "was scared of his own shadow."

He also raised the question why the complaints filed by the NBI against Lacson for his "grand and lucrative conduct" had not yet been acted upon by the Senate.

### Prosecutor defended

Saturday, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima defended one of her many prosecutors, Hazel Valdez, from Lacson's accusations that she overstayed former police official Cesar Mancao II to lie and implicate him in the Dacer-Corbito murder case.

De Lima said that as far as the case is concerned, the public lawyers directly involved in the Dacer-Corbito murder case like Valdez and Senior State Prosecutor Peter Ong "were fulfilling their duties."

In February, Valdez submitted to the prosecutors explaining the circumstances of her stay in the United States to secure Glenn Dumlao's affidavit in 2009, the secretary said.

"The accusation of Senator Lacson about the alleged subornation of perjury of Prosecutor Hazel is quite serious. It is but fair that we hear her out ... In the interest of fairness, she should be heard," De Lima said.

Subornation of perjury is an offense wherein one convinces a witness to lie to implicate an innocent person.

### Dacers' lawyer

In a separate interview, lawyer Deborah Castrillo, counsel of Dacer's daughters, said it was up to Lacson to prove his accusation against Valdez.

"He should show the subornation of the witness. It's very easy to say, but it's very difficult to substantiate," Castrillo told Cha Inocencio by phone.

As far as Dacer's daughters were concerned, he said, "the evidence points to him (Lacson)."

Castrillo said the evidence included not only Mancao's affidavit but also the fact that the abduction of Dacer and Corbito was an operation of the Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF), that Lacson was the head of the PAOCTF, and that Dacer had a letter to then President Joseph Estrada objecting to Lacson's appointment as chief of the Philippine National Police.

However, one of Lacson's lawyers, Rico Quicho, said the senator believed he could not have a "fair shake" at justice because it was the Department of Justice (DOJ) that "dragged" Mancao and his former colleague Dumlao in the United States, and then it was the panel of prosecutors who "prepared" their affidavits.

Quicho said that under then Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez and his successor, Agnes Devanadera, Lacson "had no chance at all" to defend himself.

According to him, Gonzalez said even before the preliminary investigation that the DOJ had "strong evidence" against Lacson.

"Then, they conducted the preliminary investigation and resolved it. From the beginning, the senator had no chance at all under the previous administration," Avisado said.

LACSON: It was no picnic.

# *Ping recounts life on the run; Leila unamused*

From page A1

In Lacson regaled the media with tales about his life as a fugitive, Justice Secretary Leila de Lima has a separate press conference challenged him to explain how he was able to hop from one country to another with a recorded passport, saying the senator "owes it to the country."

She said Lacson's ability to move without a passport challenged the integrity of government institutions which had been ordered to arrest him.

"I think he really owes it to the people an explain how he was able to circumvent from one country to another because a gaze into the integrity of certain processes or systems," De Lima said.

### 'Someone recognized me'

The manhunt for Lacson involved even the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol).

Lacson said that at one point, despite keeping his "head down," a fellow Filipino in a plane outside the Philippines which he did not specify, recognized him.

"I knew someone recognized me," he said in Filipino, giving no details. "Someone even wanted to take a picture with me."

Lacson took that incident as a cue that it was time to move. A former Philippine National Police chief, he was careful not to talk much about his whereabouts there.

Lacson escaped from the senate he gave yesterday was that the combined resources of the Philippine government—backed by the Interpol—seemed, on the surface, to be too much to his elusive steps, he said he attributed to his law enforcement training and "the last of my instinctive compass."

### Close calls

"When someone would greet me, I wouldn't greet him back," Lacson said as he jumped into a confession marking his first appearance at the Senate.

"When someone would see me, I would just bow my head... There were instances (when I had close calls)... [But] it [only] be one, two, three steps ahead all the time. You need to use your instincts," he said.

Lacson also got help from friends who, he said, provided him with food, shelter and cover sometimes. He declined to identify these people, saying he wanted to "protect those who carried his line."

"It was a day-to-day struggle," he said. "It was really difficult. It was hard to be away from friends, from your family, and you didn't know who your real friends were."

One friend was generous enough to provide him with a safe house complete with an Internet connection, which Lacson said allowed him to keep in touch with his family and monitor what was going on in the Philippines.

Lacson also had with him the company of e-books, such as Ann Tyri's "The Art of War," which he took with military strategies.

### 'Senkwenta' no more

Lacson said his life as a fugitive "had a big impact on my outlook on life."

"Sometimes when I was chatting with my child [on the phone], I had to tell him, 'I have to go because I still have to wash the dishes.' BIG! (In right back)."

Lacson said his life on the lam was supported a kind of discipline "1,000 times" more rigorous than during his leadership training and during his stint as national police chief under the Estrada administration.

"I wouldn't act like a señorito. I wasn't a senator (in my head's home). I was just someone who needed a place to stay," he said.

While waiting for a chance to return to the Philippines, he said he learned to cook such dishes as sinkotas, sinigang, empanada—all courtesy of Google. He insisted have to cook rice and bake pandesal, too, he said.

"I was cooking for myself," he said. "If not, I could cook for you."

Hiding from the law also virtually benefited him. Lacson, who had avoided the media since flying in on Saturday, showed up at the Senate with a fancy, brushless look.

"I didn't see much outright. I was always inside the house," he explained.

### Call from De Lima

Lacson said he spent Saturday evening in the company of loved ones. On arriving home, he played with his grandchildren. He visited the grave of his parents on Sunday, heard Mass and had a quiet dinner with his siblings.

"I thought it was the best day of my life with my family because... it was a quiet weekend," he said. "It felt like Christmas in March."

De Lima noted that while Lacson was on the run, the Department of Foreign Affairs had canceled his passport.

"If he moved from [one country to another], how did he do it? It was already beyond the scrutiny of the integrity of the processes of the... [DFA] and we are supposed to be guided by them," De Lima said.

De Lima expressed hope that Lacson would be cooperative in questions, saying she was a nonpolitical person who does not belong to any political party.

De Lima stressed that even if Lacson felt he was a victim of injustice, he still "owed it to the people" as a senator to be there because he was elected by more than a year because he won a "duly elected senator."

De Lima said Lacson should also "understand... the perspective of the Department of Justice" when she said she intended to pursue the case involving the 2000 double murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver.

The police department's "perspective," she said, "is one of steps based on the rule of law."

### No connivance

The Philippine National Police strongly denied any of its officials had connived with Lacson to keep him from being arrested while he was in hiding.

"The PNP does not connive with anyone. Connivance is not the PNP's business," PNP spokesperson Chief Supt. Agrimero Cruz said in response to Sen. Lacson on Diamond Radio.

Cruz questioned the PNP's inability to locate Lacson to the "slightest weak coverage" of its intelligence operatives in tracking down fugitives abroad has had sufficient funding.

"We only rely on the Interpol. Our police attachés have very limited coverage," he said.

In Lacson's case, Cruz said: "We cannot say outright that our police intelligence failed because the efforts were not enough. If the Interpol itself was not successful in finding him, how can you expect our intelligence personnel to track him down?"

Cruz also said that what needed to be investigated was how Lacson was able to travel from Hong Kong to other places with his regular and diplomatic passports already recalled.

With a report from Inquirer's J. Andrade

MARCOS loyalists picked in front of Quezon Church in Manila on Monday urging the government to allow the burial of the late dictator at the Libingan ng mga Bayani "so the country could progress" as the banner says. LYN RILLON INQ

# Trillanes: If we gave Reyes hero's burial, we can do same for Marcos

By Carla Gomez
Inquirer Visayas

BACOLOD CITY—Sen. Antonio Trillanes on Sunday said he was supportive of the call to allow the burial of former President Ferdinand Marcos at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani in Fort Bonifacio.

Trillanes, who was in Bacolod City chief a Department of National Defense policy that a soldier would be entitled to be buried at the heroes' cemetery.

He noted that it was the same policy used to justify the burial there of former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes who committed suicide last month after allegations surfaced that he may have been involved in corruption when he was chief of staff of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

"To be consistent, we should allow the former president to be buried there," Trillanes said. "It's time we move on. Let us get it over and done with so we can unite and move forward."

Rep. Alfredo Abelardo Benitez (3rd Dist., Bacolod) said he too believed that Marcos's remains should be transferred from Ilocos Norte, the late dictator's hometown, to the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Benitez, the son of Marcos' former deputy minister of human settlements, Jose Conrado "Jolly" Benitez, said he was among the 138 congressmen who have signed a resolution appealing to President Aquino to allow Marcos' burial at the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Marcos, who stood charges of unexplained wealth and plunder, died in exile in Hawaii at age 72 in September 1989. His remains were later brought to his hometown of Batac, Ilocos Norte.

Benitez said Marcos should be buried at the Libingan "since he was a World War II hero."

But former political detainees during martial law said Marcos did not deserve to be called a hero.

Cirilyn Lingcas and his wife Cherrie, then in their 20s and teachers of the Church of Christ in the Philippines in San Fernando City in La Union, both spent time in detention camps after they were arrested for their affiliations with groups opposing the Marcos regime.

Cirilyn, a member of Claretarian UBO that was a class suit against Marcos' estate in a Hawaii court, said Marcos and his heirs were admitted to any wrongdoing during the more than 20-year dictatorship.

"An apology from the Marcoses is long overdue. It took a foreign court to rule that there was human rights violations," Lingcas, now Philippine country coordinator of Amnesty International, said. With a report from Julie M. Aurelio

# Dinky chastises Willie over show segment with crying 6-yr-old boy

By Lolit B. Salaverria

IT WAS a clear form of child abuse, said Social Welfare Secretary Corazon "Dinky" Soliman yesterday.

In a text's letter to TV 5 chair Manny Pangilinan, Soliman castigated TV host Willie Revillame for making a six-year-old boy groan "Aruuuuuyyyy" in exchange for money on his show "Willing Willie."

Soliman said that Revillame ignored the crying boy, nicknamed "Jun-Jun," as tears streamed down his cheeks.

"Serenading a little child to dance away adult dances in exchange for a measly sum, while he is being laughed at and ridiculed will definitely traumatize the child," Soliman said in her letter.

She said what happened to the boy was child abuse and would not be tolerated by her or the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

She said the DSWD would get in touch with the boy's family to determine the impact of the incident on the child and determine if he and his parents needed counseling or some debriefing.

Soliman asked Pangilinan to rebuke Revillame for his "insensitive and deplorable actions," and not to allow young children to appear in Willing Willie and other shows that cash in on the plight of the poor.

She said that the young boy's rights were clearly violated.

"There are limits to children appearing on television, and clearly your 12 March 2011 episode did not respect the rights of the child and contravened the six-year-old law," she said.

She further expressed concern that Willing Willie was cashing in on the the poor. According to her, "there is no need to rob them of their dignity in the name of uplifting their condition."

Because co-anchor Cristy Fermin defended the clearly uncomfortable boy-to-cry-for dancing,

"How low will Revillame go to please his audience, and how pathetic and desensitized have we become as a people—allowing to allow a groom, middle-aged man torture and torment a poor, helpless child!" she said in her column.

She also noted—to her horror—that the studio audience seemed to have enjoyed the show.

In a statement protesting Willie Revillame, the producers of "Willing Willie" and TV5 said they "sincerely and deeply apologize for the segment of the show featuring 6-year old Jun-Jun which viewers may have found offensive or in bad taste."

"We wish to stress that there was never any intention to be malicious in any manner or to contravene on the show the statement said. "Willing Willie" is a program that was conceptualized to bring joy and hope and shine the spotlight on ordinary Filipinos, the program aims to provide a venue for everyone to show their talents, tell their stories and make their dreams come true. This is the thrust of every-

son involved in the program, particularly its host, Willie Revillame," the statement said.

"Like many spectators on the show, Jun-Jun, accompanied by his aunt, joined the program to showcase his talent and play in a game segment in the hope of bringing home big prizes. He has performed in the past in school programs and mall contests, and his performance in "Willing Willie" was completely voluntary and with the blessings of his parents," it added.

The statement said the long "apparent wait to be called to stage, not because he was being forced to dance, but because he felt the dance was "serious" and he was playing a role. He did not want to underscore of his praising upon from peers and spectators and the presence on the set of former basketball player Benel Balinas, pit whom Jun-Jun thought was a many "great."

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## Roosevelt Hi reunion

BATCHES 1969 to 2010 of Roosevelt Colleges Marikina (ROSE) High School in Lanuza, Gladiolus City will hold their grand alumni homecoming on April 30 at the ROSE grounds.

Theme of the event is "Roosevelteans Then and Now..." Host of the affair is batch 1987.

For more information, call Violet Lanuza at (0932-8859436, Antonine Tupaloc (0928-5589002) or Alnay Ann Miguel (0928-7944958.

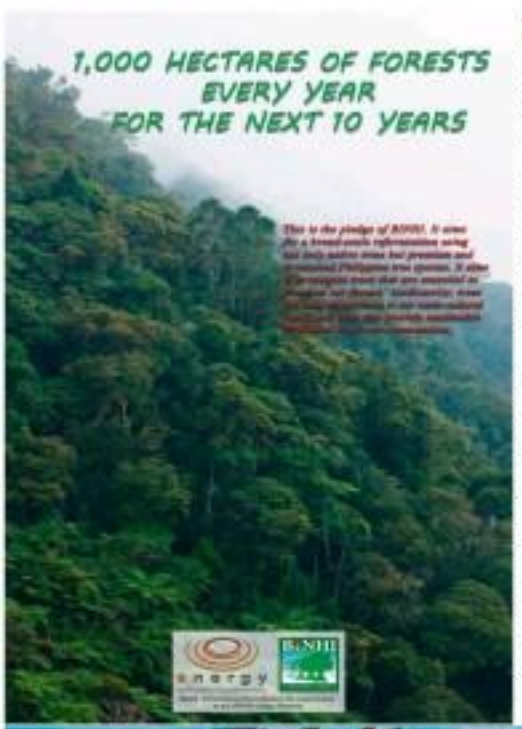
## INVITATION FOR BIDS

Date: March 29, 2011

1. The Municipality of Hungduang, Province of Mountain Province now commencing implementation of the Construction of Municipal Hospital (Phase II). Thereby invites all eligible and interested bidders to participate in the bidding for the following:
   a. are registered with the Philippine Construction Accreditation Board in contractor classification pursuant to a valid and current Certificate of Registration;
   b. have completed at least one (1) project, as the contractor, management contractor or subcontractor, a similar project within the period stipulated in the Bidding Documents;
   c. have the necessary financial capability to undertake the project.
2. Prospective bidders may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.
3. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested eligible contractors upon submission of a Letter of Intent to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 5,000.00. Payment of the Bidding Documents will be available on April 4, 11, 18, 2011 from 8:00AM – 5:00PM at above address.
4. All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of 1.5% of their bid price in the form of a Bid Security Declaration Form or an equivalent amount in a bank's or other surety's bid security, which shall be valid for 120 calendar days from the date of opening of bids. Bids will be opened at 10:00 A.M. on April 27, 2011 in the above address in the presence of bidders' representatives who choose to attend. A Pre-Bid Conference is scheduled on April 14, 2011 at 2:00PM in the above designated area in the Municipal Hall Hungduang, Mountain Province.
5. The LGU reserves the right to accept or reject any bids and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to the award of the contract, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidders, or any obligations to inform the affected bidders of the reasons for such action.

(SGD.) ROMEO C.L. WEDNAGA
Municipal Engineer
Bids Chairman

Attested: March 29, 2011




# Church drive vs RH bill form of violence against women-solon

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE CAMPAIGN of the Catholic Church to torpedo the reproductive health bill pending in Congress propagates violence against women, House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman said yesterday in a statement.

Lagman, the main sponsor of consolidated House Bill 4244—or the proposed Act Providing for a Comprehensive Reproductive Health and Population and Development—cited as an example of the violence the unrelenting and nearly prohibitive (but effective) tactics of the Catholic Church to scuttle anti-and effective contraception.

LAGMAN

### Modern methods

He said the Catholic Church has been propagating misinformation on modern family planning methods while the government has been procrastinating on the passage of the long-delayed measure.

Lagman also blamed the husbands and other men who impose themselves on their wives or partners despite the lack of a viable family planning method.

He said that this form of violence against women constituted physical, psychological and financial violence which are punishable under Republic Act No. 9262, or the Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act.

"It is physical violence because unwanted pregnancies pose high risks to women and constitute a major cause of maternal death and illness. The National Demographic and Health Survey reveals that 11 women die daily from maternal causes," Lagman said.

"It is psychological violence because women who are driven to abortion because they cannot afford another child suffer grave emotional trauma. It is likewise financial violence because unwanting pregnancies prevent women from finishing their education and securing remunerative work for which reason they are condemned to financial subjugation," he said.

### 500,000 abortions annually

Lagman said that based on a University of the Philippines Population Institute study, an average of 500,000 abortions are performed annually in the country.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines has issued a pastoral letter calling on the faithful to reject the RH bill as it is a form of "moral corruption."

The bill, according to its stated purpose, seeks to provide universal access to medically safe, legal, affordable, effective and quality RH services, methods, devices, supplies and relevant information and education with priority on the needs of women and children in underprivileged sectors.

The plenary debates on House Bill 4244 will resume in May after Congress went on recess on March 25.

# Prelate to faithful: Fight RH bill with 'deeper spirituality'

By Tarra Quismundo
Inquirer Central Luzon

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Archbishop Paciano Aniceto on Sunday called on Catholics in and Central Luzon residents of other Christian faiths to fight the reproductive health (RH) bill pending in Congress with "deeper spirituality."

"So my prayer (This bill is dangerous). It cannot be fought only by lobbying or demonstrations. Our armor is our deeper spirituality," said Aniceto in his homily at a Mass held after a rally that was mounted to protest the consolidated House Bill 4244.

The fight against the RH bill is in defense of the gospels of life, family and peace," the church leader said.

He addressed a crowd from the archdiocese and its suffragan dioceses of Balanga in Bataan, Iba in Zambales and Tarlac City.

The Catholic Church has vehemently opposed any of natural family planning methods it regards pills, IUDs and other artificial means as abortive and harmful to the bodies of women and men.

Supt. Homer Pinpoella, Bataan provincial director of police, said the crowd reached almost 5,000 people.

Life, Aniceto said, is the "most important gift of God."

"Hinging life on deception and lies diminishes life," he said. "Sacred dignity lost and life in vain has no future."

He also urged officials and members of the Philippines National Police to "promote the culture of life," expressing concern about reports that Central Luzon had the highest recorded extrajudicial killings in the country from 2001 to August 2010, based on a study supported by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Asia Foundation.

He warned the crowd that the bill bill breeds a "culture of death and individualism that is not in accordance with our dignity as sons and daughters of God."

# 12 customs men facing raps ordered suspended

CUSTOMS Commissioner Angelito Alvarez yesterday ordered the preventive suspension of 12 customs employees who were charged with smuggling and other criminal cases.

Alvarez said the customs operations officials caused the documentary processes, and other officials had been charged or linked to smuggling and graft committed against certain importers.

"The order was issued so that these officials would not be able to influence the ongoing fact-finding investigation and to correct misconceptions that the agency's anti-graft campaign was not serious," Alvarez said in a statement.

Customs Deputy Commissioner Gregorio Chavez said "a total of 12 customs employees have been charged or recommended for inclusion in smuggling and graft cases.

The employees involved were not named.

"All customs personnel who played a role in the release of smuggled products (should also) be identified, investigated and, if evidence warrants, charged both criminally and administratively," Alvarez said.

He said the agency's Run After the Smugglers (Raps) Group would also file administrative charges against customs brokers who have been accused of violating the Customs and Tariff Code.

Alvarez said the brokers' accreditation privilege would be suspended "if a complaint or charge is found by the Bureau of Customs' (BOC) Legal Service or he or she is accused or prima facie evidence is shown to support the complaint or charge."

Between July 2010 and mid-March 2011, the BOC filed 30 criminal cases before the Department of Justice.

Among those who were charged were importers and brokers of firearms, illegal drugs, high-end cars, heavy equipment, cigar, cigars and as well as used medical products. Philip C. Tubeza

# AFP starts Spratlys rehab with ₱31-M runway makeover

By Dona Z. Pazolagan and Butchpec Aeth
Inquirer Southern Luzon

THE 40MLD Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has allocated ₱31 million to repair the dilapidated runway on Philippine-occupied Pagasa Island midst the disputed Spratlys chain of islands in the South China Sea.

"That's a standing order. We are going to undertake the rehabilitation of the runway as soon as possible. We need to address this immediately. As a matter of fact we have already ₱31 million for the repairs," AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Eduardo Oban Jr. told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo Monday.

Oban also said they are preparing a list of small and aerial gun firearm and radar equipment to be bought with the ₱8 billion initial earmarked by President Aquino to upgrade military facilities in the Balesan Island Group (KIG) which is claimed by the Philippines.

The KIG is within the Spratlys chain of islands which is claimed wholly and partly by the Philippines, China, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia and Brunei.

Pagasa, is considered a strategic ally of Palawan province.

Its biggest island, Pag-asa, has an airstrip and basic facilities for the group of soldiers stationed on it who get by with a monthly delivery of supplies. But the airstrip has been long neglected and can no longer be used.

"We shall continue our presence in the area, particularly in the protection of our resources," Oban said.

"The last time our chiefs in the past...to develop our capability particularly in the protection of our maritime resources. Now that our capability for internal security operations has leveled up, we have plans for retention, especially for the preservation of our resources," he added.

Oban said the P8 billion allocated for the President would go to the "initial development for our capabilities to keep more presence in Philippine."

"The advice given to us is to come up with a list and submit it to the respective agencies," he said.

"We are prepared for the list of equipment that would address our needs. We will immediately give the list of equipment that can be converted to our economy concludes. Our mandate is to protect our interest," Oban stressed.

On March 2, Fuy Chinese patrol ships harassed a Department of Energy oil exploration vessel at Reed Bank, some 250 kilometers west of Palawan and which is part of the Kalayaan island group.

Military reports said the Chinese patrol boats reluctantly left when two aircraft from the Navy and the Air Force arrived in the area and did not do maneuvers.

In Puerto Princesa City, the Western Command (Wescom), which has jurisdiction over the Philippines' territorial claims in the Spratlys, is set to deploy before year-end new military hardware, including an advanced early warning system that will cover the country's outer western flank and an ultra-modern naval dispatch command headquarters.

"Wescom will be the first priority in the order of upgrades of the armed forces to be modernized," said Brig. Gen. Jaime de Asis, Wescom chief, in a media round-up last weekend.

Lt. Col. Ariel Librella, Wescom spokesperson, said the total budget for the modernization would be P8 billion in three years.

A fully refurbished Hamilton-class cutter previously owned by the United States Coast Guard is expected to arrive in the third quarter of the year from the United States.

Addoun said the vessel comes with advanced tactical weaponry and can support helicopter deployments.

The Philippine Coast Guard now that would mean the crews have been completing their training in the United States, he said.

Addoun said the next will be deployed in Batanes with the Philippine Navy.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

# OPINION

## Worsening problem

**EDITORIAL**

THE CASES of the three overseas Filipino workers who are scheduled to be executed for drug smuggling in China tomorrow are just the tip of a big problem that the Philippine government is facing today. There are more than 500 Filipinos facing the death penalty in various countries for drug-related cases, but in the near future, unless aggressive solutions are taken to solve the problem now, their number may increase and reach thousands.

For many OFWs, drug smuggling presents the attraction of easy money—in some instances more money than they can earn during many in a year in a foreign land. For others, it is a case of "*kapit sa patalim*"—literally, grasping the cutting edge of a knife to try to survive, or in the American idiom, biting the bullet. They have to bite the bullet because they cannot get good-paying jobs at home and cannot find good jobs abroad, either, because of the global recession. And so they end up as drug mules.

The question is why so many OFWs manage to slip through customs officers at the international airports in the Philippines. The Philippine National Police Aviation Group has admitted that the X-ray machines in the airports do not have the capability to detect drugs. The MIAA Airport Safety and Security Office, however, said trained and experienced personnel can detect the presence of drugs through "some determination."

Surely, some heads can be allocated to case-sniffing dogs like Belgian Malinois and Jack Russell terriers at the country's exit points. If more funds can be found to pay for the services of these dogs and their handlers, we do not see any reason why they cannot similarly be employed at the airports.

But the security people may be bribed to look the other way while luggage containing drugs are checked before being loaded on cargo conveyors or hand-carried bags go through at least two security checks before departure. Well, then, employ undercover people to go after officers and agents acting suspiciously, or install closed-circuit TV to record all security activities.

We have all sorts of police, security and anti-drug organizations. Can't they act in concert to prevent not just the smuggling in, but also the smuggling out of illegal drugs? The people who should head this coordinated effort should be of unquestioned integrity and incorruptibility, like Elliot Ness: "The Untouchables."

On the legal side, this should be a good time to review all the some 500 cases in which OFWs are facing the death penalty for drug-related crimes. If government lawyers cannot handle all these cases, probably a call should be made for private lawyers to offer their services pro bono to help save some of their countrymen who now face execution.

It is possible that in some cases, the accused OFWs were not given good legal advice and services. Sen. Loren Legarda said that in China, 38 OFWs were sentenced to life imprisonment, 65 to fixed-term imprisonment and 27 are still facing pending cases. There may be some cases where the death penalty, upon review, can be reduced to a lower penalty.

In the cases where the death penalty has been reviewed and affirmed by China's Supreme Court, there may be little that can be done. As President Aquino has said, "Drugs are a worldwide problem and we have to respect their (China's) sovereignty..."

On the diplomatic front, the Philippine government could, as suggested by Mr Aquino, seek for "reciprocity." Meaning, that because the Philippines as a matter of principle and policy does not impose the penalty of death on Chinese citizens who violate the Philippine law on drug smuggling, China should be requested to likewise impose the penalty of life imprisonment, without the possibility of parole or pardon, on Filipinos convicted of drug smuggling.

China should be convinced that the Filipinos who smuggled drugs into China are themselves victims—victims of poverty, in the first instance, and victims of the blandishments and trickery of drug-smuggling syndicates in the second instance.

Probably China would look more sympathetically and more kindly on OFWs caught trying to smuggle drugs into China if it were convinced that the Philippine government is doing its best to stop the smuggling of drugs out of the country and is also trying its best to dismantle local and foreign syndicates that are engaged in the smuggling of drugs.

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## Toga or no toga

**VIEWPOINT**

*Juan L. Mercado*

MR. FRAFLO Lacson requested for week-long delay after going AWOL. Generic welcome leaves for over 15 months. He kept a step ahead of a probe by Jose Diego for fraud in San Simon Pampanga, then holding in enemy Batingol. Lahon doesn't love, so can't love many with bombs.

"If you have money, even the spider will run the mills for you," says a Chinese proverb. The Court of Appeals, in the event, spanked a warrant for Lacson's arrest in connection with the murder of publisher Salvador Ibarra and his driver Emmanuel Corbito.

Ibarra was set to brief former President Fidel Ramos on the Best World scam. He never made it. Two Carter farmers were Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force operatives "set-up" Ibarra and driver with an electrical card. Their bodies were buried in a gunfire drenched fire in midnight," wrote University of Wisconsin's Alfred McCoy.

Ibarra's last book dumped on Diaz's doorstep. Not a decade more. They will appeal the CA ruling.

Lacson, meanwhile, will get a "saga" that fits. SB 22 senators will put on ceremonial trappings unless where Senator President Juan Ponce Enrile is to be the guest on May 9 to mark the impeachment trial of Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez.

Maglaro sana of old drama of saga, specially at the Cirkus Maximus and forum. In "Ecce ego propriamente" ancient orators. Dimakuwan sana ng pagkakataon, including Sen. Gregory Ferrado.

In a 2005 transcription of privileged speeches with Lacson, Ferrado thumped for impeachment that Bribery Jinxe Ponlito Lacson with gruesome crimes. Will this enter the Gutierrez impeachment, saga or no saga?

Lacson had Diaz and driver murdered, Gregory Ferrado charged. He quoted Diaz+ as telling his relatives, "If anything happens to me, Lacson is responsible."

He also phoned in Lacson the Wednesday Bantering statement. The 11 were killed in a "shoot-out." Photographs showed the bodies handcuffed/bedecked their backs.

Lahat victims of salvador included a Manila police officer, Red homicide gang relatives, a 10-year-old woman and an 8-year-old girl dumped from a helicopter into waters off Corregidor Island.

Charges against Jinxe were "Victim Have I sinned."

Jackson earlier claimed he met Commission in Chief Jinxe strained journey parrello, plus monthly P5 million falsehoods for PNP chiefs, the retiring Philippines Long Distance Telephone chairman Ricardo Salgado, Philippine Tuberculosis Society Manuel Pangilinan. On the sidelines, Ferrado cackled smugglers.

Cuatro-worker Edgar Sarmiento leaked a video of Jinxe playing high stakes baccarat. Remote was embedded in cigarette.

Senator Jinxe directly with 200CTV officials linked to the murder of Salvador Ibarra, who had marked documents on the Palace RW stocks scam.

"Both camps have the goods on each other," observed columnist Conrado Banlaoi Dalisay. "And that's why we? They were together for so long." With signatures caught, the economists professor added. "They were a crooked duo."

"Both Ramoska and Lacson couple highperson," complained Senator Juan Ponce Enrile, accused Ombudsman "both their constitutional responsibility and wash their hands of accountability. Both victims by. Both told the truth—about the other. Both took a decade before vanishing each other's congressmen. And look over shoulder up an unfit for public office."

"President Manuel Quezon, Senate Osmeña, Manuel Roxas, Elpidio Quirino, Ramon Magsaysay, Carlos Garcia, Diosdado Macapagal, Cory Aquino and Fidel Ramos were not perfect," that assessor added. "But they didn't resort to perjury, let alone murder."

Still flowing vagus mark this century when senators like to begin the commissioner's colonoscopy." The questioning is complicated further since Gutierrez is prominent, rightly or wrongly, in Bali defense for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and her senator-Bible, the target of Lacson's machinations before he went AWOL.

Those accounts ranged from the P728,000 broadband scam, diversion of P370 million of campaign contributions to private slush funds and "Jose Pidal's" P366 million bank accounts. Like Diego's "Jose Velarde," "Jose Pidal" proved fictitious. But his crushing evidence was in the senator-Makati building ownership records and recorded private. His gross grandmother was Marie Pidal.

How Lacson will judge a constitutional affair where Arroyo's vital political interests are intertwined. The accusations were condemned as "political persecution" by Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's Cabinet in Santa Ana home, after Congress moved 22 to 16 to suspend the Ombudsman.

An overwhelming way appears to remain, "or will impeachment," former Sen. Rene Saguisag wrote in the Inq. Bulletin Letter section. "That makes trial and conviction superfluous." An ombudsman loses moral authority "to be credible, acceptable, legit and effective," he summed in this 20-page article. "Resignation may be the just/wise option."

Gutierrez's husband may go quietly into the night. If presidents or ombudsmen cannot be removed, then the threat of impeachment should at least make them nervous.

Beyond substantiating vagus, people today search when displaces the known. That's what about points for victims like Diaz and his driver?

• • •

Email: jlmercado@gmail.com

## Fire them

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

AT 7:30, I first read about the details of Marilou Flores Stanwich's murder last Friday, two days after it might have to do with defending other people's funds as an accountant. She was also one in Manitou. Her colleagues and the man's handling a particularly incendiary program, one that called for raising us to the corrupt and impede who are to be found in high places employing some life, like the president of the Philippines.

As it appears, Flores might have been murdered for her work not as a journalist but as an accountant. Flores was one of the leading figures of a group calling for the distribution of a 4.2 hectare lot in Manila, Alabang, claiming it is a government property. A rival group opposes this, saying the land is owned privately. Most's before she was shot, she could hardly contained in favor of Flores's group.

Quite apparently, Flores was murdered for reasons other than she was a journalist. It doesn't matter. Solving her murder remains the government's No. 1 priority.

At the very least that it is because Flores was a journalist. Journalists are the ones doing something for the little people of whom she was one herself. Though she wasn't rich or powerful, and though she probably understood the risks of getting off those who were, she still did what she did, out of conviction, out of solidarity with her neighbors, out of a desire to give her own children a better life. That is why something ills, or any supposed to, whether "is authorial" or one of it

# Targeting poverty assistance right

NO FREE LUNCH

*Cielito F. Habito*

By the end of the decade of determined work and billions of pesos spent by the government to ease their poverty, appear to have made no dent on the overall poverty situation through the years? The latest official statistics show that the incidence of poverty to have been significantly worse in 2009 compared to 2000. From 24.9 percent in 2003, the percentage of poor Filipinos rose to 26.5 percent in 2009. As a percentage of families, it went from 20.9 to 22.9.

These figures are based on current definitions of poverty as mere lack of income, in 2009, a family of five making less than P7,017 a month was considered poor.

But we know that poverty represents deprivation in more than just income. It has social, environmental, cultural, political and spiritual dimensions as well. For example, urbanization initiatives have also turned for the worse, but dominantly school participation rate dropped from 87 percent in 2003 to 85 percent in 2008; while the high school participation rate went down from 66 percent to 63 percent. Health indicators are also worsening, for example, incidence of malnourishment has gone from a majority of our children since 2002. I could go on with more data, all pointing to worsened human welfare in recent years. If not, we only have ourselves to blame for the failure in fighting poverty in the past decade, and possibly get worse in most of the years. Why was this so?

It is certainly not for lack of government intervention. Such administration had its own impressive array of poverty-fighting programs. Only Sagip Kapamilya (SK) and Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan Program (GMA), LIKHAS (Likhang ang Kinabuhang Ugnay sa Kalikasan), Self-Employment Assistance (SEA-Kasama) program, and Tulong sa Tao among her key initiatives. Pidel's Basket had the Social Reform Agenda (SRA) anchored on the Comprehensive Integrated Delivery of Social Services (CIDSS), anti-flagship programs addressing minimum basic needs focused on the country's 20 poorest provinces. Joseph Estrada pushed for Lingap Para sa Mahihirap which provided integrated services and encouraged governments programs to the 200 poorest families in each locality. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo had the Pantawid Pamilyang Pilipino Program (4Ps), Kapit-Bisig Laban sa Kahirapan (Bubuhay), and a number of other programs, including the continuation of previous initiatives.

Well-meaning as they may have been, most of the past poverty reduction efforts stumbled on the matter of effectively targeting of assistance to reach those who needed it most. Studies showed that most of the assistance (up to 60 percent) had gone to those who did not truly need it, while the bulk of those in real need had to do (if ever) failed to receive help. While well-conceived, Cory Aquino's nutrition assistance effort so to have been well-targeted, effective targeting of her employment and livelihood assistance programs was compromised by inclusion errors from local politicians.

The Ramos administration was no interesting case. With a presidential bias for the 26 poorest Philippine provinces (defined as those with the highest percentages of poor population), government committed to push the dubious distinction of being poor of their list. Was citing geographical self-bias with Ramos home district through use as level of the National Economic and Development Authority there as he embarked in the list, arguing why their provinces were actually poorer than what the numbers suggested. Never mind that this could actually be a negative reflection on their leadership; it was the perceived budgetary windfalls they were after that caused observers, including the World Bank, pointed out the problem with the targeting approach: the 26 provinces with highest percentages of poor were mostly small island provinces, accounting for only 11 percent of all poor Filipinos. Thus, even if the programs would be dramatically evidenced in the targeted provinces, only a short record be made on overall poverty nationwide, as 89 percent of the country's poor were found elsewhere.

Estrada tried to improve on this by focused targeting assistance on the 200 poorest families per locality (provincial and city). In doing so, benefits could be more broadly spread nationwide, thus avoiding the above issue with the former targeting scheme. But Estrada's program was ended up being subject to the discretion of local political bosses who, in the name of equity, ended up giving the assistance mostly within their constituencies, with predictable results. The same political bias marked the former programs, wherein assistance was almost indiscriminately provided to even rich families whose members provided to win-rich highest-ranked areas, especially Metro Manila, but failed to reach remote areas that needed it most.

Its been not yet target-poverty assistance found? On geographical targeting, the Ramos era experience, once-suggestive that places without the poor based the Philippine poverty problem. Yet the poor based the Philippine poverty problem did not to "poor provinces", rather their percentages ("poverty incidence"), would be the logical candidates for local government units. But not to all that municipalities. Certainly, a ranking of local areas according to highest incidence of poor would yield a list led by relatively high-income cities like Baguio City (No. 1), Quezon City (7th) and Caloocan (8th). Thus, a proper combination of both beneficiary and geographical targeting would be necessary.

As for household targeting, the government's new National Household Targeting System (NHTS), along with the increasingly popular Community-based Poverty Monitoring System (CBMS), holds much promise.

With at least P21 billion allotted to assistance for the year in 2013, let's do the targeting right this time.

* * *

*E-mail: cielito.habito@gmail.com*

# Still not free

AT LARGE

*Rina Jimenez-David*

**Dead, ten families orphaned if husbands, leaders, brothers. The true cause of Lacson's long journey were not deaths of the PI man and the others, and as an honored law-enforcer and lawmaker, Lacson should be interested in getting to the root of the murders as much as in getting his reputation.**

* * *

THOSE in a position making the rounds of government agencies like the Commission on Human Rights, BJMP, DSWD and even private groups like the ERP association of retired police officers (now dominated by, of all things, a prominent ex-TV show "Talking Bible" Ian Idarich II).

The person involves a child courtesan, Cyrus Ali Jan Jan, interacting with host Willie Revillame. Ian is considered by many as a perfect TV host: media audience and TV viewers. (You can check out the video on YouTube.)

This is nothing unusual, since audience participation is a staple of many shows, and Ian has long been a staple of local variety and game shows, although Revillame has brought audience participation to a whole new high ... or is it low? But what the Ian Ian was requested to do — to serve like a "mother dancer" or a male performer in a strip club, complete with sexually suggestive bumps and grinds. The would-be is an no for a general audience variety show, but to be performed by a 6-year-old talent likely stunned fans?

No wonder the boy was clear tears most of the time, and as Revillame gleefully pointed out during Ian Ian's dance routine, was cheering around many as he grooved to the music. Revillame also praised Ian Ian's performance in that of the famous scene of Gina Lamas-Jose governor of Batangas in the film "Burlesk Queen" where she dances a suggestive number that causes her to have a climactic while onstage.

Clearly, Revillame, who is reputed to be the highest paid TV host in the land, was unaware of the issue and dismissed Ian's performance. But did that stop him from exploiting the boy's talent, as well as his poverty? This, for a few minutes' humiliation, Ian got received P18,000. Still, stop does not excuse Revillame's contemptible behavior of those sexually suggestive moves Ian Jan Jan was made and again, and having a titillating good time along with his audience, including the boy's aunt.

REVILLAME WAS indeed one of his old media whose he enjoyed a massively profitable reign as king of daytime variety because of a couple of things: one that he had the support of the lack of competition from the big networks, and of luck and pure talent. But he doesn't seem to have learned anything with his stumble in Channel 5, with Ian Jan's ordeal just the latest example.

I still remember how I saw him at Revillame. Year something a few of his "Willing Willie" shows as well as those in his old TV hours, but given me an idea of the general tone and nastiness of his brand of variety. I got to watch Ian Jan's guests on his show, especially those who were called up to be "Willie's Angels" — the ones who were supposedly selected by the host's people, and the ones receiving celebration of children being done by Revillame in the name of "generosity."

A memory that stands out was one old man from Bacolod — a retired police officer — who was invited to appear on the show. Revillame asked him questions about the pension? Mr. he is that as long as "Willing Willie" runs, even though will continue laughing and making fun of the likes of Ian Jan.

# Staying and leaving

*Because I promised I would write about the people who matter. And because words are all I really have.]*

THERE ARE few of us in my room tonight. Sleep is far from our minds as we go over the papers strewn on my bed, trying to make sense of the things that make up our memories. It is way past midnight. It has been a long day and our brains are bushed out, way past the point of caring what our heads hit as we promise

**YOUNG BLOOD**

*Jasmine N. Shershenevich*

I make of the four gifts to the room and what they mean to me and the fact that we three have been punctuated by saying and hearing.

We seem to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? The awesome contributions from the twenty-something and below. —EDS

There's the girl beside me, the first one. She is my best friend though we don't always talk that much. She is my companion in unspoken appetites and we have had the earliest fights that sometimes haunt weeks, but at the end of the day she is the one who knows me best, the one who can calm me down and cheer me up, the one who listens without judgment as my stupid stories and pass a smile on my face. If she can't solve my problems.

Her dad works in another country and comes home once or twice a year. She's been moving from house to house and country to country for as long as she can remember. She has never had a stable home, and I envy her for this. It's probably why she has never gotten used to just staying anywhere, ever. I don't know if she'll ever be easy in one place, in how can I ask her to please remember me someday?

The other one, she's small-time funny. I love her trash-talk-ative and frank comments. We have done a lot of things together, from sleepovers to business deals to just being dog foundation dates when we drink the weather isn't looking. She doesn't know it, but I think she will go a long, long way. Sometimes I think she might take her own country someday, one where there's always a seat (small) at Petron 23.

The new one, like the first, has a smile that is always there, but she dreams of something bigger, something farther. She plans to go to some other place after graduation. She plans to travel all over the world because she loves to go places—Paris, Hong Kong, Japan, the list is endless. How do I tell her that as much I would love to see her go places, the utmost responsibility of will be to keep on my hometown over missing her?

Then there's the seemingly quiet one. She is not quiet really, but one bit. All through the years I have known her to be dedicated, hard-working and fiercely loyal. This not to say she is one of my closest friends, but I am extremely amused by her photographs, her ability to immortalize people and places and things. I am also amazed by her willingness and readiness to go anywhere, anytime.

She is, for lack of a better term, scrunching girl turned into a city student. She has grown so much in four years, no longer completely the shy girl who was afraid to speak in front of a big semi-independent that helped form her. Like the one before her, she too wants to go places—Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, etc.—but I know she will go even further, and I can not just talking about places. I can do I thank her for her endless patience and for letting me have unlimited story free rides in the new heads of the 'mobility.'

And of course, there's her. I don't want to call her the tall one because there's so much more to her than her height. Talk of loyalty and she is probably one of the people who is second she loved. I will never forget the way she grew into her confidence as an editor, the way she's matured, and the way she beams when she gets recognized for them.

She is the only one among us who hasn't been out of the country. Funny, but although she is the one who has spent the most time here she doesn't look like it. She dreams of going to another country where people look like her, and will not stare at her because she is so tall. How do I tell her that she is much more than what she thinks she is?

And then there's me. Neither here nor there. Both and tained in one country, but supposedly belonging to another. I dream of going to other places, too, but I also dream of going home. I wonder what the future holds for me months from now, when I look at our yearbook photos with a smile on my face but tears in my eyes.

Our lives are punctuated by staying and leaving—by the people who leave left us, by the people who have stayed for us, by the people we have left behind, by the people who have stayed for. Things will be different from this moment, I have no doubt. Somewhere along the way, things are going to happen and things won't be the same again. If one lives, are moments in motion, how do I tell them that even if I know leaving is inevitable, there's always going to be a part of them that will always remain with me?

In closing, I'm not sure. I think of our friendship, of our backdrop, our fights, our high moments, our low moments, our adventures, our silly jokes and weird anecdotes. There's still so much to do but we have little time to do it. How do I say what I need to say before time runs out?

I honestly don't know. But I know that right now in this moment, this night, this laughter and those smiles. And you know what? Right now, it is all I could ever want.

*Jasmine N. Shershenevich, 20, is a 4th year AB Mass Communications student at St. Scholastica's College Manila.*

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*Send your contributions by e-mail to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address, age and the school, course and/or work you're enrolled in or, if employed, the position you're holding and the office you serve. Only contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.*

**THEY SAID**

Citizen Noy

"As a citizen of the republic, I am really not happy with the performance of the Ombudsman and her people... Again I'm expressing my opinion not for an attack on her but I don't see a reason why dismissals cannot level up of Secretaries of public servants."

—Presidential Spokesperson, ordering the support of the people to the ex-parliament of Ombudsman Conchita Carpio-Morales

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# Opinion and the gullible columnist

NEWSSTAND

*John Nery*

OVER THE weekend, Philippine Star columnist Cornelio Pedroso contributed a terrible blunder. The criminal Filipino is being the most gullible people in the world—and ours must take more seriously a fake study by a fake institution to prove her point. Unfortunately, journalists, particularly columnists, are particularly vulnerable to fake news, and Pedroso's column, which did not realize the whole thing was fake.

Pedroso's degree of professed gullibility last Saturday and her dishonest repeater on Sunday are destined to become classic of opinion-page journalism. We need to remember them as we face online clamorous and ridiculed in media groups and on online social networks. I fear, though, that some readers will merely shrug their shoulders and think: Still, that's opinion writing. But on that score, you just don't get it.

In the first place, the reason I wish to draw some lessons from Pedroso's error mistake.

In the first place, regular opinion writers are journalists, too, and are bound by the canons of journalism. The principle holds, whether the opinion writer is self-hosted as a practitioner or not. To quote "The Elements of Journalism" again, the essence of journalism is the discipline of verification. That does not mean that every newspaper editorialist should be original reporting; it does mean that such opinion must be based on a scrupulous regard for the facts. "Common sense," the long-time Dateline editor CP Snow famously wrote, "is not facts are scarce."

Secondly, regular opinion writers have a role to play in the public discourse, precisely as opinion makers. But opinion-making is not mere opinion-ing, it requires an engagement with the relevant facts, and presupposes a thinking through. Opinion-writing, in other words, is an act of reasoning.

To be sure, journalists as a whole is humanity to make mistakes, to get wrong or get things wrong, to the wrong date, the wrong name, the wrong spelling, even the wrong interpretation. But journalism itself is a never-ending process for seeing our work from error. Columnists ought to recognize this basic truth and, when mistaken, readily admit their error—it's part of the whole public discourse thing.

* * *

It is possible that Pedroso was merely being ironic, or clever, herself? But first paragraphs she devoted to the non-existent Harvard study and he not contradicted in the second, "There is a serious allegation we should not ignore.") preclude that possibility, but it did not stop her from trying to wound out the following day "The Mosquito Press (the name of the website) ... has thought of a clever way to mock Filipinos not to be gullible, so I put it up to the rest of my column reminders."

But she did not merely "put it up as the rest." She embraced the very notion (absurd on its face) that a study can demonstrate "the level gullibility of people in the world." Even columnist on Saturday passed severe judgment on the Filipino's drinking capacity, "No one gullible because we are not able feel or do not question information. He prefer to believe what other persons tell us." Including, apparently, what he read on the Internet.

I do not dispute that Filipinos can sometimes be gullible. But we can other people. The Sarah Palin phenomenon, for instance, is proof that Americans have a thing or two to teach us about gullibility.

I doubt if Pedroso will see it this way. On Sunday she wrote, "Whether or not that's true such a study by the said that Filipinos are the most gullible people on earth' is true she point most whether it is true that Filipinos are gullible most of the time." Perhaps the last point is true in Pedroso's case; what her Saturday column proved is that at least one Filipino was gullible enough to believe in fake news.

The story itself is full of grammary details. Her humor-column that "a study conducted recently on 16 countries in the gullibility ranked, that the concept Pedroso chose to run satirically — sounding details that no thinking person, certainly not someone who presumes to lecture on the importance of critical thinking, would have undertaken for fun. For instance, she wrote: "It may seem like a trivial source but according to the authors the study involved 'random analysis of over 500,000 historical documents from 16 different countries.' As an honor take it seriously?

Half-a-million historical documents for 16 opinion-interviewer "most of the time" you?

* * *

The way Pedroso lauds the colonial legacy may seem to give the lie to my assessment of the facts. "I would have been among many other Filipinos who would have said the same thing, but it is just as well that I refrained from [sic] to it," it is possible to argue that she read the alleged study first, and was impressed by its conclusion Filipinos for our colonial legacy.

But I do not think so. In all likelihood she began with her conclusion. She has regard for her fellow Filipinos, especially those who did not see the wisdom of wholehearted change during the Marcos presidency. She was not satisfied with enough to vote for Noynoy Aquino, a no-name. She must have been why when she clicked on the link and saw the story, she failed to follow her own advice and "question information." The result: credulous fact-worthiness and non-thinking.

* * *

*postcolonjuan@yahoo.com; ph.jabinoy.wordpress.com*

# Tragedy in Japan

LETTERS

MINOR 10 usually the first among several countries that come to our aid whenever great natural calamities befall our land and people.

Thus, in a sick deep sadness that we watched images of massive destruction in the northeastern part of Japan after it was ravaged by a recent magnitude-9 earthquake and a tsunami that brutally swept away buildings, homes and cars as if they were miniature toys, killed thousands of people and crippled a nuclear power plant now releasing radiation. Experts say a map color-coded to show the degree of radiation in the area around the plant (which is contaminated as have destroyed billions worth of property), some of it may have to be dealt with a deadly radiation threat for decades.

We mourn the loss of countless lives and grieve with the relatives of the dead. We feel for the victims and the survivors, and stitch the Japanese people are a whole.

How "normal" can we as a people recommend helping hand to a friendly nation who has always been ready to help us in our time of need? Are we ourselves prepared for the Big One? How are basic "shakes" enough to make us tremble and get things right in our corrupt and depraved nation?

"...prepare to meet thy God..." —Amos 4:12

—HENRY VALENZUELA
romanvalenzuela@yahoo.com

If you have any complaints, please write our reader's advocate Ombudsman Jullie Yap Daza at ombud@inquirer.com.ph.

Opinions of letter writers are welcomed; to include their complete address and telephone or paper number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

## Miriam in the Senate: Mother of the people

THE SENATE voted to bring Miriam Defensor Santiago to session. In a parliamentary debate "suspension" means excluding the senator-member (or "absent-by-ring") from the session. Thank goodness. Many hoped that Senator Santiago would win "insane" enough to make a great difference in the Senate. I regarded her as the Filipino people's mother in the Senate.

It's sad that she was not even present in the final Committee hearing to defend her budget in the unprecedented way. Santiago says she can no probable cause against the senator and calls the suspension some opinion she is a zealous Ombudsman as an extreme move.

With due respect to Senators, it distresses her to see "like" is spoiled between members from left or right planes. Moreover, I'm not a senator who cannot overhear the Office of the Ombudsman is becoming a morgue for cases filed against officials and allies of the former administration. Senators say "weakening investigative" is very well commented in the old-school "Bad opinion." "Absolutely," I'll tell. Accordingly, "the fabulous like the fabled 'Rising Adrian'" in other on and pointless cases. Pity would she give Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia a "Not Inquirer"? Is Garcia making his collection of ugly decisions in the Aquino administration to shut he give money? Isn't it the opposite? Or can he be a sure witness and just be penalized with packages—one participant every corners he already under? Miss Sen. Angelo Reyes, who was not honorable to collect insurance claims from his schools, outclassed by Colonel Reyes "untravelling" would-be delayed Garcia was not enough to confuse the impending Aquino administration. We'll find out soon as soon as the Reng tokens is clipped. It belongs in songs, not in the personal office of the Ombudsman.

So dear Senator Santiago, "Hay"—remember when you excitedly rooted to learn politics? Let me just say that you are most loved for the flowing moments when you look away from your desk and work, and you're not the brilliant politician/judge/lawyer-man you are but nobody is crying mother so your children. We need our mother in the Senate now, not the politician.

—EMILIO A.M. SANTOS
ermilio.santos@gmail.com

## SC impeach case aims at stability of judiciary

THIS RESPECTS to Gonzalo Bernal III's attack to column titled "Save the money!" The members of the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) are contemplating on filing an impeachment case against some members of the Supreme Court (SC) for grave abuse of discretion committed by the latter in connection with the LCP issue because the LCP failed to prevent the integrity of the Court is on unstable. Impeachment is a legitimate course of action enumerated by the Constitution. The LCP's stance, therefore, cannot be considered "unconstitutional."

The LCP's claim of flip-flopping is not with an basis. The Court rendered a decision on June 16, 2006, declaring unconstitutional the 16 cityhood laws. This decision became final after new motions for reconsideration by the 16 municipalities were denied. An Entry of Judgment was made on May 23, 2009. The decision was executed when the Department of Budget and Management issued DBM Local Budget Memorandum No. 63 on June 30, 2009, providing for the final IRA allocation for 2009 due to the retention of 16 newly created cities to municipalities, and when the Commission on Elections issued Resolution No. 8530 on Sept. 22, 2009, ordering that voters in the 16 municipalities shall vote not as cities but as municipalities in the May 10, 2010 elections.

Despite all these, the Court still considered multiple motions filed to maintain the status quo in the 16 municipalities and rendered three more decisions: (1) Dec. 21, 2009, declaring the cityhood laws constitutional; (2) Aug. 24, 2010, declaring the cityhood laws unconstitutional, and (3) Feb. 10, 2011 declaring the cityhood laws constitutional. There were also orders from there years! If this is not flip-flopping, then I really do not know what is. Under this flip-flop case-Court protocols, especially in cases involving the Constitution, we supposed to deeply study and solve deliberate and meticulous in their decisions.

The LCP at the same time, has consistently maintained that an inquiring city must comply with the compulsory requirements of the Constitution and the Local Government Code. This is the mandate of the fundamental law. The rule of law must apply to be obeyed and upheld in all cases.

There have been jurisprudences that supposed to annul the P200 million income requirements and, consequently, were successful in converting to cities. The city of Sta. Rosa was converted in 2005, Mandaluyong in 2006, the cities of San Juan and Navotas in 2007, and the cities of Biñan and Bacoor/Imus in 2010. The LCP embraced the conversion of these cities.

The members of the LCP are more than willing to part with their IRA share to save citizens' tax qualified. What were violated in this case were the Constitution, the Local Government Code of 1991, and the stability of the judicial system.

At the end of the day, it is not "all about money." It is about the Constitution and the rule of law.

—RICARDO B. MORENO
mayor, San Fernando City
and national president,
League of Cities of the Philippines

# Kin offer tsunami of prayers

Front page A1

On Sunday, Christian evangelist Eduardo Villanueva called on Filipinos and all Christian churches in the country to "join in a tsunami" in three days' worth of intercessory prayers.

Seventy-two others Filipinos are facing death sentences in China, but they had been given two-year reprieves. Under Chinese law, a death sentence with a two-year reprieve is commuted to life imprisonment for good behavior in jail, according to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

## Prayer vigils

Starting at 6 p.m. today until early Wednesday, families of Sally Villanueva and Credo will mount prayer vigils in their neighborhoods in Bonifacio Pangasinan.[1] Bayani Fernando in Cavite is overseeing and in Bonifacio Hills, Quezon City. They will be joined by members of the militant Filipino migrant workers' group Migrante International (MI).

The ECFI and the Archdiocese of Manila's Ministry for Migrants and their families also set a prayer vigil at 6 p.m. today at Santo's Schools de Gran Santo Jhesus in Ermita, Manila.

The rosary will be recited during the vigil, the coordinators announced.

"Our Church continues to pray and hold Masses hoping that God may touch the hearts of the Chinese government and that they postpone the executions of our fellow Filipinos," Cerezo said.

MI president Leny Matienzo said that "unlike some top officials of the Aquino administration, we are still hoping the executions will not push through."

Ethan Y. Tan, spokesperson of the Chinese Embassy in Makati City, yesterday told the Inquirer that Beijing's position on the issue had been "made clear" as early as February when the Supreme People's Court in the Chinese capital announced the three executions in death.

On Saturday, Ambassador Liu Jianchao asked for understanding from the Philippine government and people's "respect for sovereignty and judicial sphere about" the executions that he said would not have to take place amid international protests.

## Lethal injection

On March 24, the DFA announced that the executions would be carried out tomorrow, March 30.

Villanueva and Credo will die by lethal injection in Xiamen, and Bautista will be executed in Shenzhen. It said: "The three were arrested separately in 2008 for smuggling 4 to 5 kilograms of heroin to China."

Claims had postponed the executions originally scheduled for 8th, 20 following an official note to Beijing by Vice President Jejomar Binay on President Aquino's behalf.

The President on Saturday told reporters that Malacañang had been "continuously (with Chinese authorities) ... but there's only so much we can do. I will trying to get them to reduce the penalty, but there's a limit to what we can do."

"At the end of the day, these seven crimes committed in a different country it doesn't help that they admitted they were doing something illegal," Mr. Aquino said.

"But it doesn't make us stop trying," he added.

## Migrante picket

Yesterday, Migrante members picketed the DFA headquarters in Pasay City, lamenting the agency's "slow legal response, if not inaction" in the cases involving over 1,000 Filipinos on death rows in various parts of the world.

The protesters has published a three-page seven statements of Villanueva, one of the Filipinos convicts, who said she "was only used as a courier to smuggle drugs from the Philippines to Xiamen." She named her executors, Hilgert Cerezo, also Ito Cerezo, as the source of the drugs she carried.

Villanueva said Cerezo was "part of a big drug syndicate operating in the Philippines and other countries" and that she "knowingly violated" law in relation to carrying a controlled substance considered heroin." Cerezo has, indeed the allegation.

In a statement, Binay said he was "saddened" that Villanueva "was used by a drug syndicate" and, therefore, "does not deserve the death penalty."

"He hope and pray that her officials" would be considered. We do not condone drug trafficking, but in today's case, her executive clearly took advantage of her trusting nature," he said.

## Chinese law

Binay assured that "under Chinese law, the sentence here of possible is granted to leaders of drug syndicates and allows leniency for those in lesser positions."

He was referring to Item No. 2(c) of Chapter 4 of the "Notice of the Supreme People's Court on Implementing the Criminal Policy of Combining Leniency with Legality" issued on Feb. 28.

"Item No. 3) states that masterminds of smuggling, fraud and drug trafficking shall be sentenced to severe penalties of death. However, those who were forced to join the crime organization or who played minor roles shall be given leniency or commutation if they assist the suspensions," Binay said.

According to the Vice President, "this is the basis we can appeal to China. Those drug syndicates took advantage of the economic difficulties of our colleagues."

Commission on Human Rights Public Counsel Jacqueline Ann de Guia said that some relatives Villanueva's affidavit would have an "impact" and help save the three Filipino convicts. "That's something for Chinese authorities to decide," he told reporters.

## Recruiters

"It's now in the hands of China whether her execution would be stayed or not," Cerezo-Sing said. He noted that even if the Chinese officials had previously said they would not change their decision to proceed with the execution, the Palace would continue to hope otherwise.

Still, he said the government would "continue to work effectively and pursue Villanueva's executors. "This was a crime committed by more than one person and we're going after the drug syndicates that led to the death sentences," he said.

Assistant Foreign Secretary J. Eduardo Malaya, who is also DFA spokesperson, said "there is much value in allowing her (Villanueva) to speak unfettered, even if only to reinforce what is being said to assure to allow themselves to be duped by drug traffickers."

Malaya appealed anew to Filipinos traveling overseas, especially overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), "not to allow themselves to be used as tools or willing victims of narcotic criminal drug trafficking syndicates."

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Cerezo assured them that they could always seek out the Church and its clergy for problems which the government cannot not tackle such. This also applies to other distressed OFWs, he said. With reports from Christine D. Avendaño and Jocelyn R. Uy

LAST CATCH FLEE. Relatives on Monday offer prayers in front of the Manila Cathedral for seven Filipinos facing death sentences in China. Three Filipinos scheduled to be executed in China on Wednesday for drug smuggling. INQUIRER PHOTO

# Power firm trips, apologizes again and again …

TOKYO—The utility behind Japan's biggest nuclear plant disaster can't seem to get much right.

The officials' hunted officials from Tokyo Electric Power Co. (Tepco) have repeatedly announced botched radiation readings, corrected themselves even and over and indulged in seemingly endless rounds of apologies.

Even how days, Japan's nuclear safety industry needs them to "monitor steps to prevent a repeat of such mistakes," Prime Minister Naoto Kan said.

The bumbling efforts slowing tonight into the embarrassing failure of crisis management as the nation's top utility which admitted 160 billion in annual sales.

The officials have been doling out information piecemeal about the unfolding crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power station, which erupted after back-up generators—critical as power to the systems that cool the reactors—flooded in the March 11 tsunami. For which the company was sorely unprepared.

And the mistakes keep coming. Take Sunday, for instance:

## Major errors

In the morning, Tepco told reporters that radiation levels in contaminated water in one of the troubled reactors at the plant had surged to 10 million times the level that when the reactor was working normally.

Eight hours later, Tepco's vice president Sakae Muto found to apologize. They had gotten it wrong, misreading a machine that analyzes water samples and mistaking one radioactive isotope for another.

The real numbers were instead not to be 100,000 times normal—still high, but well below their previous reading, earlier figure. But caused an immediate overreaction of workers from the reactor.

"That sort of mistake is not something that can be forgiven," Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano said.

Earlier Monday Tepco was handed apologies again for managing to turn up in its reactors. In it, had gotten their isotope warning not just once, but twice.

If such errors seem alarmingly ordinary to most of the world, they are basics for the nuclear power industry, where misunderstanding two isotopes is a major error.

## Not fully equipped

Masahiko Tanaka, a Fukushima-native plant designer named nonnuclear activist, said utility officials weren't fully equipped so as to monitor the response to the crisis.

Tanaka said utility officials weren't familiar enough with nuclear engineers, say more than pilots or even unknown know the design of a jet engine.

He urged more involvement of designers and other experts.

"When a jet begins to crash, you don't ask the pilots for answers to what's gone wrong," he said in an interview.

## Missteps

A few examples of Tepco's missteps:

- For the first week after the tsunami, Tepco's radiation reports showed that hourly readings of airborne levels near the plant's gates were as high as recommended health levels. In fact, they had been off by one decimal point, by dozens of readings by days. Radiation doses that would be limited to the limit by 13 times.
- When three Tepco workers were hospitalized with radiation burns to radioactive water, the company gave their condition only as "unknown." Days later, the hospital and governmental officials reported the workers' conditions—but Tepco still refused to say anything.
- Tepco officials said two of those workers were injured while not wearing protective boots to walk into highly radioactive knee-high water. The company has yet to explain how that happened.

## Stonewalling

When pressed for details, Tepco officials often simply don't answer. They say they will check, stand on answers would disclose personal information, or just don't know.

After battling has been by close on lack of coordination between Tepco and its main government regulator, the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (Nisa).

Tepco and Nisa give separate news conferences, often refusing to reconciling information. At one point, Nisa acknowledged the possibility of a central meltdown in much stronger language than Tepco officials, only to retract it days later.

## Central crisis office

Crisis management experts say it is critical to have a central crisis office to release consistent information to the public and the media to avoid causing fears and to coordinate information from the utility, government, regulators and local officials.

But in Japan, responsibility tends to be spread out, impeding crisis management. AP

# Highly toxic water seeping from damaged nuke reactor

Front page A1

complex since it was damaged by a March 11 earthquake and tsunami that also left more than 27,000 people dead or missing across northeast Japan.

Radiation measuring 1,000 millisieverts per hour was detected in water in an overflow tunnel outside the nuclear plant's Reactor No. 2, Japan's nuclear regulator said in a news conference.

That is the same as the radiation level recommended on Tuesday The Environmental Protection Agency says a single dose of 1,000 millisieverts is enough to cause brain reddening.

The tunnel leads from Reactor No. 2's turbine building, where workers found the water, directly to the sea. Saturday, to an opening just 50 meters from the sea, said Hidehiko Nishiyama, deputy director general for the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency.

The contaminated water level on that section of the tunnel, from the exit of the vented, U-shaped tunnel and rising, Nishiyama said.

## Unsure about overflow

Contaminated water also was found in tunnels leading from Reactor No. 1 and Reactor No. 3, though at much lower levels of radiation.

"We are unsure whether there is a crack or overflow" of contaminated water out of

LOW BRAND. Various kinds of fish are displayed at Tokyo's Tsukiji fish market on Monday. Farmers in the rising produce manufacturers and are of organic fish, the market has seen workers standing idle—in demand for seafood and orders from producers drops amid global worries about Japanese produce after nuclear scare. AP

the tunnel, Nishiyama said.

He said workers were undertaking efforts to first remove the water from the turbine building.

Government officials have said that the water is likely leaking outlets from the smuggling it to 6 kilograms of heroin to China.

Claims had postponed the executions originally scheduled for 8th, 20 following an official note to Beijing by Vice President Jejomar Binay on President Aquino's behalf.

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## Unsure operation

Tepco has conceded it faces a protracted and uncertain operation to contain the overheating fuel rods and avert a meltdown.

The operation is proceeding in concrete schedule at the moment to enable us to say in how many months or years (the crisis will be over)," Tepco vice president Sakae Muto said in the form of round-the-clock briefing the company holds.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Yukio Edano, the government spokesperson, said on Monday it was too early for people to return to homes within a 20-km radius of the Fukushima plant.

"We cannot guarantee safety

## No evacuation

There was no evacuation of the roughly 1,800 workers discussed at the Fukushima plant after the high radiation levels were discovered. Since the crisis began on March 11, 19 workers have been exposed to radiation levels of 100 millisieverts.

Despite the new problem, workers on Monday were still trying to determine a way to approach the nuclear building of Reactor No. 2 to enter the tunnel.

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"We cannot guarantee safety

## 6.5-magnitude tremor

Residents there have been repeatedly rattled by aftershocks from the powerful magnitude-9 earthquake that struck off the coast in Japanese history, including Monday's 6.5-magnitude tremor that triggered a tsunami warning.

"I lived through World War II, when there was nothing to eat and no clothes to wear. I'll live through this," Muto's Watanabe said, sitting cross-legged on a blanket in an evacuation center in Fukushima.

"But the scary thing is the radiation. There is a gap between what the government says and what the government is saying. I want the government to tell the truth," he added.

The latest death toll was placed 10,884 people, with 16,244 people missing 17 days after the disaster.

Almost a quarter of a million people are living in shelters, and the damage could top $300 billion, making it the world's costliest natural disaster. By parts from Associated Press Writer Jennifer Hall and Reuters

# When we started, the place was so desolate, barren, and malaria-infested

## You should see it now.
### (and so should the gang of noisy do-gooders)

In 1986, going to Barrio Rio Tuba was like living an Indiana Jones adventure. To reach the place that nobody cared or dared to visit, you first had to endure 10 hours of a bumpy, dusty bus ride from Puerto Princesa to Bataraza's Point on the east coast of south Palawan. Then you had to spend the night there.
From there you only had one choice of transportation: a pump boat.
On a good day, the exhausting sea journey to Barrio Rio Tuba took five hours. On a bad day, you just braved the rough seas and stopped counting the hours.
And when you finally got to Barrio Rio Tuba, you were greeted by an undeveloped, barren site.

For all the biodiversity associated with Palawan, this particular spot was sadly unproductive land because of the limestone nature of the soil, an unwelcoming host to meaningful agricultural produce.
But, what nature has made agriculturally inhospitable it compensated by providing minerals instead. Minerals, like nickel, that is indispensible in our lives in this modern world.

Turning an isolated, undeveloped and barren area like Rio Tuba into productive use, though, is not an easy task.
You need vision, guts, perseverance over many years, a great deal of know-how and tremendous financial resources.

**The rewards of responsible mining**

Today, 40 years later, Rio Tuba, located in the municipality of Bataraza, is a thriving town propelled by the mining community.
Thanks to the presence of Rio Tuba Nickel Mining Corporation (RTNMC) thatsince, in 2009, ranked as 6th in total assets, 4th in total income, 2nd in net income and 5th in cash ending balance among the 25 municipalities in Palawan.

This newfound financial windfall has given its growing number of residents access to electricity, potable water (in contrast, 275 municipalities in the country have no access to potable water)and efficient garbage disposal.
**Bataraza is now a first class municipality.**
We now employ more than 5,000 employees and contractors.

In 2010 alone, the combined Rio Tuba operations infused **P164 Million** for community assistance and livelihood projects under the DENR-mandated Social Development Management Plans (SDMP). But there is more.

**Gawad Kalinga and Rio Tuba Mining Corporation:Together we bring free housing to the people**

When we first started operations in our mining area, the indigenous people from the surrounding areas lived in squalid and flimsy thatched huts.

Today, in partnership with Gawad Kalinga and its founder, Antonio Meloto, we have given the indigenous people free housing to improve their quality of life.
79 houses have already been built.
50 more units are under construction.
We have already spent **P29 Million** for this, and there will be more to come. More than just a comfortable and sturdy structure, the Gawad Kalinga-RTNMC partnership has given the recipients a reserved trust, a renewed confidence to trust their think and act as a community and to share the joy of a town rising from poverty.

**Together with Fr. Jerome Marquez, SVD, and Arnold Janssen Catholic Mission Foundation we bring Alternative Learning System to indigenous residents**

Fr. Jerome Marquez, SVD, is one of the country's leading educators.
In partnership with Fr. Marquez and Arnold Janssen Catholic Mission Foundation, we provide support for the Indigenous Learning Center in Rio Tuba.
We set up the first school in Rio Tuba to give the indigenous people access to alternative formal education. The program provides a viable alternative to the existing formal education instruction, encompassing both the non-formal and informal sources of knowledge and skills.
619 students were enrolled in 2010 and we spent **P5.6 Million** that year.
Forty five years ago, before we started developing Rio Tuba, there was no educational concept, no school program whatsoever provided for the indigenous people.

**We bring free elementary and high school education to Rio Tuba**

We believe in the importance of education to the future of this country. More importantly, we believe that whatever education we offer in this isolated place should be competitive with the best schools available in the capital cities.
**That's why we partnered with the La Salle brothers to share their system of education in the elementary and high schools we have established.**
1,230 students were enrolled in 2010.
More than 90% of them were born adjoining barrios and were non-dependents of our employees. Operating the schools cost us **P20.8 Million** in 2010 and we will continue to fund it.

**Healthcare in the hinterlands**

We have provided a hospital to take care of the healthcare of the community. In 2010, 2,746 patients were admitted.
An additional 45,538 were treated as outpatients. Operating the hospital cost us **P60.3 Million** in 2010, and we will continue to fund it.

**An Agriculture Research Center. Because we want the land to be productive.**

Since 1986, there have been advances in agriculture.
Some unproductive land can now be tilled to give farmers new produce.
Productive land can be made more productive.
To constantly provide the latest farming methods, we brought to Rio Tuba one of the best botanists in the country, Dr. Bilisario Rafer, holder of a Phd in Forestry.
Already he has made it possible for the farmers to increase their food production with the introduction of new and improved farming knowledge.
Additionally, RTNMC has donated more than three hundred heads of improved cattle to make Rio Tuba self-sufficient in their livestock needs.
Intensive hog raising has also been introduced by RTNMC.

**Responsible Mining: We help build the country**

While occupying less than 0.35% (one third of one percent) of the entire Palawan land area, RTNMC has contributed to the national economy by generating more than **US$605 Million** in exports and paying almost **P3.1 Billion** in taxes.
But more important is our leadership in promoting responsible mining in order to make the industry an important partner of agriculture in harvesting the wealth from our land.

> We have to remember that there are only two industries in this world that create real wealth from nature. One is agriculture and the other is mining. All the rest of the industries depend on these two and cannot survive without them. Looking at the very basic, we cannot stop agriculture and mining because they produce the basic building blocks humans need to survive.

**Responsible Leadership. Responsible Mining.**

RIO TUBA
NICKEL MINING CORPORATION

A SUBSIDIARY OF NAC

MEMBER Chamber of Mines of the Philippines

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor: Tony Bergonia

# Int'l aid sought to save Ifugao terraces

By Vincent Cabreza
Inquirer Northern Luzon

BAGUIO CITY—Ifugao Rep. Teodoro Baguilat Jr. left for Bali, Indonesia, to seek international sponsors who might invest in the upkeep of the centuries-old rice terraces regardless if the solons are able to keep their status as a World Heritage site.

Baguilat was scheduled to speak on Monday before the Asia Pacific Indigenous Peoples Resource Sustainability and Standards Summit.

He said he was seeking independent funding for the terrace preservation with the condition: Follow the Ifugao community's standards, not the benchmarks supplied by Philippine ecology engineers.

"Unesco used to listen to the perspectives of the indigenous Filipinos ... but as indigenous Filipinos insist on being consulted to secure their lives, secluded to secure their lives, informed and prior consent before mining and other development projects requires implementation domain, it should be the same case when dams continue to bring their progress to Ifugao and other indigenous communities," Baguilat said on Friday.

## Gov't disinterest

He said one, he said, was part of a pledge to top officials of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (Unesco) that he made under funding support for the conservation program. He was also he was told that the agency had been disappointed by the national government's apparent disinterest in the program.

The assistant cultural values previous of administrators revised the statement and drew attention about the national agency overseeing conservation took down, which some Unesco officials considered a breach of the trust built up to date, Baguilat said.

In 1995, Philippine officials pushed the Ifugao Terrace Commission to the Banaue Rice Terraces' Task Force. Senator Presidente Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo abolished the task force in 2001 on part of bureaucracy streamlining.

Baguilat said it is the provincial government to fulfill the country's obligations to the World Heritage Commission (WHC).

## WHC inspection

Unesco Director General Irina Bokova was scheduled to fly over the Ifugao terraces on March 27, but poor weather forced a cancellation. A 12-member WHC team created on a 10-day mission visit on March 28 to determine whether the Philippines fulfilled its terrace conservation promises.

"I already spoke to Unesco's Phil presence, Irena Brodil. They kept insisting that the terrace is not in danger site. If some problems have been addressed, but I added that, realistically, heritage protection is the least of the government's priorities," Baguilat said.

He said Ifugao had insisted the fact that the progress made in reversing the deterioration of the terraces should be credited to the Ifugao communities that were not even consulted about whether they wanted their farms to be recognized as heritage sites.

"But they were schizophrenic the state has the biggest responsibility. And I agreed because the Ifugaos never asked for [inclusion in the list, the state did. It would be proper if we let them find the answer," he said.

But he said Ifugao needed to maintain some measure of control over how the resources would be preserved, given how they inherited the obligation from Malacañang.

ENDANGERED: The precarious grassy rice terraces of Ifugao have been classified by Unesco as among the endangered world heritage sites.

# Tribal chief rejects Sierra Madre green tourism

By Dodie T. Mallari Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

LUCENA CITY—A tribal leader has rejected a proposal by an environmentalist official to transform the remaining lush virgin forests of the Sierra Madre into a haven for green tourism, saying the plan does not seriously consider the effect on the indigenous people's culture.

The Green Shaker is part of an ancestral land according to government laws to any project and program should seriously consider the impact on our culture," said Hap Bantilan, tribal governor of the Agta Dumagat, in a mobile phone interview on Monday.

His remarks, regional director of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, said the government was considering efforts to tap the country's pristine caves, rocks cliffs and untouched virgin forests in the Sierra Madre mountain range to boost tourism that could provide alternative livelihood to upland outlaws dependent on illegal logging for a living.

The settlers, especially the indigenous people, can serve as tourist guides and people involved tourism in the urban settlements, Tesoro said.

Green tourism is one of the priority projects of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the conservation, management and protection of the Green Shaker Eastern Watershed to be funded by the World Bank.

The Agta Dumagat tribe, however, has been strongly opposing the watershed project. Aside from encroaching on their ancestral land, the site is in earthquake prone area, it said.

Bantilan said the green tourism project "would only bring low income" to the community as it is not in the vision of an alternative livelihood.

He urged the government to instead wage a serious campaign to stop illegal forest activities in the Sierra Madre.

"Once illegal logging, truly stops and poor finally provide in the mountains, we feed others' economy and ensured economic opportunities will come next and we will be able to take care of our own people," he said.

Bantilan said the green tourism project had already been endorsed by the Kuala Watershed Management Council in a resolution in October 2009. He noted that the signatories included former tribal governor Thelma Amancebo and other tribal leaders.

Amancebo, however, has been accused by tribe members of using her position to cover up her purported illegal logging activities. She was replaced by Bantilan in a tribal election last year.

## NEWSBRIEFS

### ■ DAGUPAN CITY

**Alert for NPA attacks**

POLICE and military forces have beefed up alert for possible attacks in time for the 42nd founding anniversary of the communist New People's Army (NPA), today.

Lt. Col. Oliver Bellad, head of the army's 10th Infantry Battalion, said the forces were fighting against extortionists and land-mine attacks. Last week, he said, seven soldiers were killed when rebels detonated a land mine in Sta. Cruz town. *Belinda B. Ching, Inquirer Visayas*

### ■ NORTH COTABATO

**Village head slain**

SUSPECTED rebels ambushed and killed the head of the association of Barangay Chairmen of his town in Barangay Poblacion 4 in Midsayap municipal town early Monday.

The victim, Allan Rafon, was the barangay chair of Poblacion 4 Midsayap and a businessman, according to SPO1 Ramonito Panalo, town police chief. He had four gunshot wounds and died while being treated at the hospital a little later. Rafon was critically wounded. *Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

### ■ BINALBAGAN CITY

**Fire hits neighborhood**

AROUND 100 families lost their homes or belongings in three-hour fire that hit a residential area on Mabini Street.

Fire Officer 1 Glenn Olana of the Bureau of Fire said the fire started at 1:27 p.m. in the shop of Melvin Ayala, a tricycle driver. Olana said the fire spread to nearby houses because of strong winds. "Twelve fire trucks, ambulance and other fire-ready equipment," Mendiola said.

The families were evacuated to Binalbagan Elementary School. *Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

### ■ LAGUNA

**Councilor shot dead**

A MUNICIPAL councilor was shot dead and his wife was wounded in an ambush in Barangay Bubuyan, Calauan, in Pagsanjan town on Saturday noon.

Ronnie Sutton, 46, died at Pagsanjan Medical Center from two bullet wounds in his back, police said.

Sutton, who had been receiving death threats, was driving with his wife from the barangay hall when his aide, Fedina Mesias, and village counselor Antonio Moreno Jr. around 2 p.m. when the gunmen attacked. The killer escaped aboard a motorcycle. *Marlowe Cruz, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

### ■ PANGASINAN

**Dolphin dies on beach**

TWO-PROJECT dolphins beached in the shallow waters of Barangay Bantayan Island in Dagupan City on Sunday, but one died despite a rescue effort by conservationists.

Authorities said conservationist Reynaldo Alam is a member of the Philippine Marine Mammal Stranding Network and Response Action Rescue Rap to stands on the reported sighting.

Alam noted a group of conservationist the dolphins from drowning by cradling them as they floated. *Victoria Tolentino, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

# *Fund drive to send poor achiever to UP*

By Yolanda Sarmiento
Inquirer Northern Luzon

CALAMBA, Laguna—Penniless yet a child Nikki Estrella is graduating valedictorian at Calamba Comprehensive Barangay High School and has passed the tough entrance test at the University of the Philippines, where she plans to take a BS Math course at its main unit in Diliman, Quezon City.

These feats would have meant happy moments for Estrella, who wants to be a teacher, but her family's financial problems, especially now that her 52-year-old mother Gregoria is suffering from diabetes, could derail her dream of entering UP.

"My mother is very sick," she said.

Gregoria says the family is convincing Nikki to enroll in a local university where a scholarship grant awaits her, because in her heart, she knows that she is smoking her daughter's dream.

Gregoria has been suffering from diabetic complications that led to kidney failure. She undergoes dialysis at least twice a week, and this has drained the family's meager resources.

She earns P6,000 a month as an administrative assistant at the Dagupan City government, while her father, Archimedes, has no permanent source of income.

"My boss is spend almost P15,000 weekly for dialysis, or almost P60,000 monthly, since September 2010. I had to take out loans from different agencies, but I would not reserve these loans until I have [made partial payments]. My take-home pay is down to P15,000 a month," Gregoria said.

But there is a glimmer of hope for Nikki.

Some of her teachers, Janet Alfaida, and her friends have started a fund drive dubbed "Send Nikki to UP."

"We are proud of her and Calamba people should ... support her. We will be seeking guidance of Calamba High School officials," Alfaida said.

The friends of Nikki's are also looking for people to help to her mother's medical expenses.

Gregoria said the family could not afford a kidney transplant. "I have accepted that anytime, I would pass away. Now, I only ask God to let me die. I am always in pain," she said.

She had applied for financial assistance with the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office for her dialysis sessions, but only her pension was approved.

Nikki belongs to a family of academic achievers. Her three older sisters graduated with honors in high school, and had availed themselves of college scholarships.

Another graduated with a BS accountancy degree at the University of Luzon. Diana is a language and literature sophomore at UP Baguio and Eunice is a BS Accountancy freshman at University of Mindanao.

Like her sisters, Nikki's only hope to study at UP is finding generous souls or people who would help her family.

She described herself as a "late bloomer" in academics. She started attending preschool at 5 and entered Grade 1 at Calamba Central School when she was 8. "I was in the third section in Grade 1," she said.

When she reached Grade 2, she was transferred to the top section, but she failed to make the honors' list. In Grade 3, she smoked again and in Grade 4, she was awarded.

She persevered and garnered third honors in Grade 5 and in the following year, graduated valedictorian of her elementary class.

The honors she got did not flow down through high school and will reach with more than 900 batch mates losing their graduation ceremony on April 4.

# Chartered flight stopped at Zambo; 82 women held

By John Aligada
Inquirer Mindanao

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Authorities may have foiled a large-scale attempt to send Filipino workers to Malaysia after 82 women were held at the airport here before they were able to board a chartered aircraft on Thursday night.

Senior Supt. Edwin de Ocampo, acting city police chief, said he had received an emergency call from the Philippine Center For Transnational Crimes (PCTC) about the scheduled departure of the women, mostly originating from the Visayas and Luzon.

There is no flight from the city to Malaysia and the report made officials suspicious that the women were victims of human trafficking, De Ocampo said. He said the malfeasance could be long term but was immediately aborted and nullified.

The task force found that a woman only chartered flight from Kota Kinabalu had landed at the Zamboanga International airport on Wednesday night. Cebu Pacific, airport manager, confirmed the arrival of the Philippine-registered 8M plane.

"It is a chartered flight, it's a Filipino-owned aircraft, the pilots are also Filipinos, but it flies to Malaysia," De Ocampo said.

Authorities found that some of the women, aged 19 to 25 years, were underclothed.

Senior Insp. Gemino Lara of the city police's women's desk said some of them claimed they were going to Malaysia as tourists. But others, she said, admitted that their destinations were Jordan and Lebanon, where they would be working as domestic helpers.

De Ocampo said what was alarming was that although the women had passports with them, they did not have visas or other travel documents.

City prosecutor Ronaldo Cabacan said a deeper investigation was needed. "It's not just a simple isolated circumstance, it's large scale, a highly organized syndicated group recruiting innocent people and luring them to work abroad," he said.

Cabacan said could investigation revealed that some Chinese could be behind the attempt to smuggle out the women.

**Grizzlies strengthen NBA playoff chances**

MEMPHIS — The Memphis strengthened its grip on the NBA playoff opportunity 111-106 victory over San Antonio on Monday. If the Grizzlies, which holds the final playoff spot in the Western Conference, earn the No. 8 seed, they will face the Spurs in the playoffs. Other results: Lakers 97, Bobcats 84; Thunder 99, Trail Blazers 90; Heat 125, Cavaliers 118; Mavericks 94, Suns 83; Celtics 96, Timberwolves 87; Kings 104, Nets 111; 97, Hawks 88; Cavaliers 83, Warriors 114; Wizards 106, Jaz

Editor Teddyboy B. Melendres
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Chiaw

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# Palami tips Azkals' WC qualifier foe

## Philippines picked to prevail vs Cambodia or Afghanistan

By Cedrif P Topas

CAMBODIA AND Afghanistan loom as possible first-round opponents of the Philippines in the 2014 World Cup Qualifying in Asia.

After advancing to the AFC Challenge Cup main tournament next year, the Azkals are shifting their focus to the World Cup qualifying, which the country is joining for the first time since the 2002 tournament in South Korea.

Though the Philippines' next opponent will not be known until tomorrow, team manager Dan Palami said they have received inside information that the Azkals may be pitted against Cambodia or Afghanistan on June 29 and July 3.

ANGEL Guirado (right) embraces his cousin-teammate Rob Garcia as the rest of the Azkals celebrate their 3-0 victory over Bangladesh in Bangkok. ALVIN KASIBANG

Because they did not join the last two World Cup qualifying stage, the Azkals are ranked 54th in the bottom 16 teams that will be playing in the first round.

Afghanistan and Cambodia are ranked second and third among the 16 teams.

"It's safe to say that we will be favored if we draw either of the two teams," said Palami at the victory luncheon hosted by broadcasting giant ABS-CBN, which holds the rights to the Azkals' matches.

"We will start planning after we know our first-round opponents," said Palami. "The community of the game will be dependent on which team we will face."

The Azkals are enjoying a run of good results, starting with the AFF Suzuki Cup where they reached the semifinals for the first time last December.

They made it new to the AFC Challenge Cup main tournament last week, after beating Bangladesh, 3-0, following draws against Palestine and host Philippines in the qualifying round in Rangoon.

The Azkals received a P1.5 million bonus from ABS-CBN yesterday for qualifying to the Challenge Cup, apart from the national's P600,000 cash for their three matches overseas last week.

The group is part of an agreement with the network in exchange for the right to air the team's matches.

Palami said the target is to reach the third round of the World Cup qualifying.

"Reaching the third round will be like surpassing the achievement of making the semifinals of the Suzuki Cup," said Palami.

Also playing the first round are Laos, Myanmar, Chinese Taipei, Macau, Timor Leste, Pakistan, Pakistan, Mongolia, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal and Malaysia.

The winner of the eight home-and-away games in the first round will join 22 other teams in the next phase, where teams will be drawn for another set of home-and-away series.

Powerhouse teams like Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Iraq, Oman and United Arab Emirates are already seeded in the second round.

The 16 winners in the second phase will move to the group stage qualifying, where Japan, Australia, South Korea and Bahrain are already seeded.

# ICTSI-Philippine Open back at WW East May 12-15

By Hussang R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE Open is back in the Asian Tour calendar with its old home, Black Bush East Course in Nasugbu, after its annual championship on May 12 to 15 and the International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) as title sponsor.

"We regret the leaders in the (Asian Tour) Order of Merit to come," said ISM tournament director Aston Tour director who has pushed for which Peach president Philip Ella Juico and National Golf Association president Leandro Mendoza during the event's launch yesterday.

"Black Peach is happy and proud to once again host the ICTSI Philippine Open," Juico said. "We thank ICTSI and the rest of our sponsors for supporting the event."

After a two-year absence, the home of a course known as Peach Black East—newly renovated to fit international standards—promises to be an even tougher contender in compare to the $500,000 event.

Tournament said a total of 156 players will be seeing action, including 25 foreigners, led by defending champion Miguel Tabuena. Also in the event with a first-ever 265 total. "The winds can also play a big factor."

Miguel Tabuena, who came from behind to humble mentor Frankie Minoza and Elmer Salvador at Valley said.

"With its new look and design, I am expecting even higher scores," said the long-hitting Cebu pro, who won with a five-under 265 total. "The winds can also play a big factor."

"It's definitely a tough course," said the 36-year-old Tabuena, the youngest ever Filipino pro who compiled the lowest two weeks ago with a one-over par 71.

"I think two or three under could win. The important thing is to keep the ball in play."

The co-sponsors include San Miguel Corp., Globe Telecom, Lexus and HSBC while Srixon, Ayoh, Blackberry and Lacoste host Hospitality.

Work on the course started after Quiz's victory. It was lengthened to more than 7,200 yards with new fairway bunkers on landing areas and some are expanded dropped to sea level to give competitors a tougher time with uphill drives.

After Peach Black started rejuvenating the Asian Tour, the Opens were played at the Makiyami in Cebu City in 2009 and then at Valley in Antipolo last year.

Elmer Salvador, the former caddy from Tarzan's Apo Golf, went to Lipa.

Quiz said that he hopes that the title stays in a Filipino's hands.

"Hopefully, we have talented players here and we can play with the best in the region," Quiz said. "But like I said, winning the Opens depends on a lot of things. And if the Asian Tour's men do come, it would be a great tournament to match."

Juico said there are plans to expand the tournament to the public with shuttle to be given out to control the crowd.

Mendoza said he would approach this event like any other he has played before. "With foreigners (in the field) or not, it's still the same for me," he said.

FINALISTS Bonyor Airon Aurora, Alexis Jan Melarlo, Chino Manuel Pesquera, Justine Oliver Serrano, Yuichi John Takeda, Rube Lorenz o Perez, Ferdinand Marone III, Alfred Gajiga, Jarrell Lee, Lorenzo Navarro

# Paras, Ravena lead Jr. NBA Manila finalists

LA SALLE Green Hills' Kobe Lorenzo Obrias and Missouri Fer dinand Ravena III lead the 24 finalists picked from over 300 hopefuls in the recent NBA Manila Inspiration Selection Camp.

The top 24 players aged 16 to 18 years old will join the other finalists from Cebu, Bacolod and Laguna in the National Training Camp in April, where the 16 NBA Philippines All-Stars Team will be chosen.

Joining Obrias and Ravena are San Sebastian's Bonyor Alaurin tonion and Lorenzo Fernando Navarro, Xavier School's Jarrell Lee, La Salle Zobel's Alexis Jan Melarlo and Alfredo Gajiga, Ateneo Blue's Chino Manuel Mosqueda, La Salle Green Hills' Daddy John Yuichi and Malvarez High School of Science's (Manila) Justine Oliver Serrano.

A total of 340 kids participated in the Manila selection last March 26 as it held another Open in Emerald, San Juan.

Ten more kids from the Alaska Power Camp will round up the nationwide search where the 60 finalists will compete for slots in the national camp from April 11 to 30 at the La Salle Green Hills Gym and on April 11 at the SM Mall of Asia.

NBA legend AC Green of the Los Angeles Lakers will conduct the three-day event along with US Jr. NBA coach Frank Lopez, NBA head of basketball operations Jana Mahaffey and local Jr. NBA coaches led by Alaska's Jojo Lastimosa, Jeremie W. Pape

# Azkals & Pacman: This is not puppy love

BARE EYE

*Ricardo Trinidad*

BEFORE THE presidential Azkals could resume their love affair with Filipino fans following a romantic victory in Rangoon last week, there was already Manny Pacquiao dangling earthly thrills in their seasonal football menu.

"I want to meet the Azkals, but sure we have a national football team called the Azkals," Pacquiao gushed.

The pledge of admiration and support for the Azkals, who had to rise past adversities that culminated during the Rangoon competition, Pacquiao made during the Philippine Sportswriters Association's annual awards night at the Manila Hotel's ballroom.

* * *

In the same PSA affair, Pacquiao took time out to humble himself.

Pacquiao, the point of honor gave the floor to the Azkals.

There's more to Philippine sports than boxing, he said. He stressed there's more to Philippine sports than Pacquiao.

The same sweetened boxing fighter in the world's money pie cannot afford to be full of yourself.

It doesn't surprising he wanted to be truly proud of, it's to being a true Filipino.

* * *

Those were our sound bites, or simply those opinion-making songs.

He did not say "Bayo ang Bato ko."

Those were no empty promises, there was nothing hazy.

There was also a projected speech, but the next touching lines were the lines Pacquiao penned to all his.

No wonder, he looked and sounded every inch a genuine self-made superhero.

* * *

Anyway, nearly a couple of weeks after that monumental appearances, Pacquiao was back at center stage during the Dimitz Awards night, also at the Manila Hotel.

Pacquiao was a party spoiler again after the Azkals had triumphed in Rangoon as it was a slot in the Asian Football Confederation Challenge Cup's main tournament.

Please note that not a few Azkals diehards some already projecting to be headlined as filled other diets pumps have been showed lavish in a sweet win downtown Rangoon.

Maybe these same fans were resenting us, mostly downgrading their former devotion to the Azkals for simple calculation.

Was dramatic 3-0 comeback win over Bangladesh, following shaky pitfall drawn in their first two games in Rangoon, however, shook the cancer fans.

The explosive victory no-see that Internazionale-trained full-dressed love-affair.

* * *

There's no turning back. What more about was as unshakable evidence.

This is not puppy love.

Anyway, Pacquiao explained during the Dimitz Awards that, as a Filipino, he decided to throw his support to the Azkals.

And the Boxer: "In the midst of all our achievements, there is more to accomplish; there is more for us who believe in the support of the people and the power of God."

And amidst also referring to the Azkals, he added: "We took a chance to believe in ourselves in the midst of adversities."

In conclusion, and maybe as relevant to the Azkals' plight, he said: "We are living some moments of hope as we see the horse inside of pain."

Of course, this should also be taken as a wake-up call for national sports officials, mostly those in the Olympic environment, to put an end to politicking and mismanagement.

The most neglected Azkals were among the big victims of this unpronounceable practice.

* * *

JERRY NATIONAL WORKSHOP: The family and National Coaching Association of the Philippines, in partnership with the University of San Jose-Recoletos, presents its First National Basketball Coaching Clinic/Workshop: "A Closer Look into the Modern Setting, on April 1 and 2 at 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the USJ-R Gym. Also on the important role of shared-based workers in the community. Noey Laugher Raps author to the various topics like Discovering the Slow Motion, Improving Skills in Family Dynamics, Outside Perimeter, half-court to reach Basic Setting, etc. For inquiries, contact the secretariat (02) 3940303, Mizores H. Andales (09178630453, e-mail: ja quirol@pscp.org or visit www.pscp.org.)

# MEFP race meets goal

MILES IBRAHIM and Jhaven Reyes took top honors in the 1st MEFP Run for a Cause held recently at Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

Ibrahim bested Gerald Mauricio and Nobert Gallo in the 5K men's race while Reyes beat Nikki Bonifacio and Jhaiza Lumodiamo in the women's side.

About 1,500 runners joined the day-long event that raised funds for the disaster relief program of the Marriage Encounter Foundation of the Philippines.

"The positive response we received showed that by working together as a family, we can achieve our goals and objectives," said MEFP head couple Robert and Dante Inocencio.

The event was sponsored by San Miguel Corp., Dutchmall Building, Pentart, LPU Blackwood Association and Jose Reyes Memorial Hospital. Florence S. Asuncion

RESULTS: Men's 5K — 1. Miles Ibrahim (20:30), 2. Gerald Mauricio (20:42), 3. Nobert Gallo (20:44), 4. Jeffrey Bautista (20:45), 5. Jeffrey Cruz (20:46), 6. Jeffrey Ramos (20:47), 7. Jeffrey Ramos (20:48), 8. Jeffrey Ramos (20:49), 9. Jeffrey Ramos (20:50), 10. Jeffrey Ramos (20:51). Women 5K — 1. Jhaven Reyes (24:00), 2. Nikki Bonifacio (24:01), 3. Jhaiza Lumodiamo (24:02), 4. Jeffrey Ramos (24:03), 5. Jeffrey Ramos (24:04), 6. Jeffrey Ramos (24:05), 7. Jeffrey Ramos (24:06), 8. Jeffrey Ramos (24:07), 9. Jeffrey Ramos (24:08), 10. Jeffrey Ramos (24:09).

FOR CALAMITY RELIEF Runners there line in the 5-5K event.

# 4 D-League teams eye win column

By Jazmine M. Paya

MAGNOLIA forget Blue and Cafe France eye to crash the win column today when they collide in the PBA D-League Foundation Cup at the Ynares gym.

Hoopsters Blazers in their opening games, odds are even when the Batang and Cafe Breeze collide at 2 p.m. Cuisine Et Art 2 p.m.

DC Gilmore and Bongo Jones take on for their first victories in Group A at 4 p.m.

The games will be aired on an hour-late on starting at 6 p.m. on IBC 13.

Coach Pido Jarencio said he's confident that the Batang, bolstered by key players from University of Santo Tomas, will bounce back from their 61-61 loss to Maynilad.

"Our LOST) veterans haven't played competitive basketball for quite some time, that's why they struggled," he said.

LIST standouts Jeric Teng, Clark Bautista, Chris Cantos and Jeric Serrano lead the Batang along with Ateneo basketball veteran players Jacques Cabanos and Rudy Lingganay and Far Eastern University's Raul Lemonon.

Cafe France, using Cesano Escobar Gamorot, try to win play reminds big man Jewel Ponferrada, who absorbed an 82-63 blowout at the hands of preseason foes Gilwanta Lhuillier.

Foreign Aidan, although hampered by a small cut from Adamson, left to league heavyweights NLEX, 71-62, two weeks ago.

On the other hand, PC Gilmore absorbed a 72-76 loss to Charlie Pipes.

## Teroria, Simon the week's best

ALASKA'S LENNIE Mike "LA" Teroria and Derby Ace's Pinky Jude "PJ" Simon jumped from inconsistency to drive to the PBA Philippine Cup last week to share the Accel-PBA Press Corps' Co-Players of the Week honors.

It was the first award each award for Teroria in the six American, while the Ace Simon's second for the season.

Simon received 2311 points and 8.5 rebounds in leading injury-plagued Derby Ace and jumpstarting with a 2-0 drive in the PBA Philippine Cup.

Teroria shot in some high 20 points and led Alaska to a come-from-behind 120-110 victory over Meralco last Friday.

ALASKA'S Lo Teroria drives past Bal Mercado and Gabby Espinas of Meralco on Friday's wild and tense encounter. AUGUST MAGTOTO

# Pacman spars four rounds versus Porter

By Ray Lustre

CAN MANNY Pacquiao bring his sharpness in training to his upcoming opponent?

Chief trainer Freddie Roach believes so as Pacquiao, stepping up his preparation for Olympic Stadium, treats the outside of underwater super welterweight Shawn Porter at the Shape Up Gym of the Cotaysan Hotel in Baguio City today.

The 23-year-old Porter, who was accompanied by his trainer Gordon Gowing, is a former Golden Gloves champion who sports an 18-0 record with 13 knockouts.

Thought he proved to be an even larger foe Pacquiao when they first sparred in 2009, Porter has improved a great deal, bulked up, and added pop to his punches.

According to assistant trainer Sonny Nery, Pacquiao and Porter will spar for four rounds, with lightweight David Rodela held in reserve for Thursday's session.

The 27-year-old Rodela (15-2-1 with 9 KOs) was brought in for his versatility and resiliency.

In his training camp against Mexican Antonio Margarito last November, Pacquiao sparred 100 rounds, just to supposed to log around the same number in his defense of the IBO welterweight title against Mosley on May 7 at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas.

# PBA tackles Barako exit

## Salud fines Aces import, 4 others

By Jane Navarro

THE BOARD of governors of the Philippine Basketball Association will thrash out the proposed transfer of the Barako Bull franchise to Phoenix Fuel today.

At least seven of the 10 governors have to agree on the proposed sale of the franchise of Red Bull, which had notified the league of its decision to leave for good starting with the Governor's Cup in the next conference.

Barako Bull opted out of the current Commissioner's Cup with its slot taken over by the former Cebu Filipinas national line.

The board will reconsider the terms of relocation for the bidding of a new television investor for the league's 37th season which will start in September.

Solar TV had informed the PBA that it would not renew its contract after its expiration in June. The games of the Commissioner's Cup are being aired on Channel 23 of ABS-CBN.

Meanwhile, commissioner Chito Salud yesterday upheld the fingertip foul 2 slapped on Alaska import LD Williams which resulted a one-game suspension and a fine of P200,000.

Williams claimed to have accidentally hit Meralco's Mac Cardona with an elbow to the face in the Aces-Bolts game last Saturday which Alaska won in overtime, 116-111.

"I'm standing by the definition that was called [on Williams]," said Salud. "He did swing his elbow against the face of Cardona.

"He knew and aroused where Cardona was and extended his elbow. It was an illegal act, which was both excessive and unnecessary."

Apart from Williams, Salud also fined Alaska coach Tim Cone, his deputy Joel Banal, Meralco hosts manager Virgil Villaviencio and Aces defensive specialist Jay Washington for the fines they confronted technical and game officials.

Salud fined Cone P25,000 for entering the court and approaching the table officials, fined P10,000 for doing the same and Villaviencio and Mercado P20,000 each for accosting the referees after the game.

"There was a breach of protocol on their part," said Salud. "The rule says an member of the team can approach the referees and technical officials during and after the game."

The total fine worth P95,000 will go straight to the PBA Players' Trust Fund.

22nd LANCER Sidelights

International Junior Tennis CHAMPIONSHIP

# Kenyans, Banayag steal Globe Run 21K limelight

By Ramona S. Acosta

THE HOSTS' juggernaut rolled over the men's field while last winners local runners ruled the distaff race in Sunday's Globe Run for Home at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig.

Benjamin Kiplimo ruled the centerpiece 21K men's race in 1 hour, eight minutes and 16 seconds, outlasting compatriots James Thilimo (1:08:04), Mikel Kirby (1:09:42) and Philip Tanui (1:10:30).

Jho-An Banayag paced the women in 1:26:41, followed by Alma Ann Barrera (1:28:21) and Elizabeth Nino (1:32:42).

The top three players pocketed P15,000, P10,000 and P7,000, respectively.

Kenyans Josphat Tow (48:51) and Rudy Thiko (51:46) finished 1-2 in the 15K, with Bienvenido Bruzuela (59:00) and Theodolfus Dolano (1:00:20) showing up Kenyan Brian Kipchumba (1:00:07).

Over 7,000 runners joined the race, which donated proceeds to Gawad Kalinga, Habitat for Humanity, Haribon Foundation and Veluzo Foundation.

"We're overwhelmed with the support from our runners," said Globe president Fernie Go.

# Bacolod lass fells PH junior ace

BACOLOD: HERO Therese Acevedo upstaged a national junior team member while favorite Phillip Jasper Pascua sustained his first loss to local the hosted of 32 entrants in the 13-19 singles version of the PA midlists Philippine Badminton Ranking System (PBaRS) at the Riverwalk in Hinbak City yesterday.

Acevedo, of Bohang Badminton Club, rallied from a set down to thwart Janelle Dizon one Victoria of the PH juniors team, 19-21, 21-9, 21-9, and subsequently topped the elite of the competition, the kicked leg of a four-stage tournament-ranking circuit.

Pascua, seeking to add the championship here to his Pilipinas Pinto Open and National Open titles, lined up to his top billing, whipping Christian Gimenez of UP Diliman, 21-9, 21-14, as upsetted the majesty of the 16 victims in the next round.

Suddenly turning out a national juniors are was Joshua Montecillo, who scored a 21-11, 21-9 triumph over Theodore Christopher Co.

The rest of the national juniors signed—Carlos Bercasio Capistrano, John Benedict Mendoza, Gerald Silbayan, and Dennis San Ignacio—advanced in the eight-day tournament sponsored by MAP Sports Foundation Gaul Pilipinas, Bingo Business Corp. and Victus.

Capistrano defeated John Paolo Santos of ZITC, 21-17, 21-13, while Mendoza turned back Seven Kevin Chan of JC Badminton, 21-11, 21-8; Albayan prevailed over Jonathard Phil of Whackers BA, 21-11, 21-14; and San Ignacio dominated Michael Jim Dagalila of Ateneo Training Camp, 21-16, 21-8.

**Other results:** Girl's singles: Mayang L. Bajet (de Ayala, 21-9, 21-8; Lara Beatrice Lee-Bernardo (Ateneo, 21-9, 21-6; Jordan Dawn A. Jose (Ateneo team, 21-12, 21-9.

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# Top guest cockers vie in NCA tilt today

A TOP-CALIBER roster of invited cockers were action-ready in a leg National Cockers Alliance (NCA) derby at the Vitarco Sports Center in Pasig City.

Derby hosts Mayor Jerry Acuzar of Nueva Ecija and Tommy and Joel Tiro said the elite organization of breeders and cockers have invited, among others, Mayor Bonby Castro, Bong Dizards, Among Ang, Mayor Gene Dy to compete against NCA members in the Superpuro Complexor competition.

The other guest cockers are engineer Teodie Baja, Victor Lacuata, Ben Manabanan, Ben Abdulcain and Wilson Chua of Nueva Ecija, Mayor Ochilia of Pangasinan, Sen. Vic Sotto, Claude Bautista of Davao, JV Ejercito of Zambales, and Romeo Peña.

Meanwhile, the entries "Kapatar All Gold" and "Jade Blood 1" drew the wire in the NCA Cocker of the Year race with 26 points each.

Looking behind the co-leaders are the entries "JV San Roque Cockpit" with 23.5 points, followed by "Goldpoint Champions" (21), "Jesus" (20) and "Magnolia Cantata" (18.5).

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Editor Alejandro S. Mendoza

**DID YOU KNOW**

Composer and conductor Levi San Pedro has created music, including hymns and noise theatrics and scores, for over 60 films. Known for his creations like "Sa Ilalim ng Dagat" and "Lahing Kayumanggi," which were from the Republic Cultural Heritage. Award in 1962, he was named National Artist for Music in 1961. San Pedro is a classic National Artist for Painting Carlos "Botong" Francisco. **Jakati Bondoc Inquirer Research**

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# 4 hurt as panic hits LRT passengers

## Commuters break train windows, doors after spotting smoke outside coach

By Jeannette I. Andrade and Paolo G. Montecillo

A PASSENGER who shouted, "May usok! May usok!" (There's smoke. Something's going to explode!)" caused a panic inside a train of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 yesterday morning.

As a result, four people—including two teenage girls—were injured when passengers who wanted to get out of the train broke several glass doors and windows.

Earlier, a technical malfunction caused smoke to rise from the train wheels, throwing some commuters into a panic.

Several people then reportedly punched through the windows and doors just to get out of the coach. The panic, however, caused pieces of the glass to fly, hitting four passengers.

Caroline Santos, 22; Jenelyn Valentino, 32; Pauline Anne Rasco, 18; and Estrella Dacuscos Rasco, 50, were taken to the LRT Clinic at the Central Station where they received treatment for minor injuries.

The malfunction led to a 15-minute delay in the southbound light train system's operations.

LRT Authority (LRTA) administrator Rafael Rodriguez, meanwhile, apologized for the mechanical problem which he said was caused by a solenoid valve which was repaired in minutes.

Describing it as a reducer on fire inside, a solenoid is an electromechanical device which allows an external device to control the flow of a gas or liquid.)

### Cause of smoke tracked down

After a thorough checking of all the switchboxes and internal components of the train, the engineering and maintenance team found out that the smoke was caused by a worn-out solenoid valve, Rodriguez said.

He added that they would maximize an inventory software to boost the preventive maintenance of train parts.

Based on reports, a Taulanan-bound train (Body No. 1017) was approaching the United Nations Avenue Station on 11th Avenue in Manila at around 8:45 a.m. when some passengers saw smoke coming from under the coach in the middle.

"Some of the passengers pushed the emergency button. When the doors did not open right away, they resorted to breaking the tempered glass doors and windows. Everyone wanted to get off." **AMBET AG**

# 'Ondoy' victim wins 6/45 lotto jackpot prize of ₱23M

By Tina G. Santos

TALK ABOUT a reversal of fortune.

A 57-year-old passenger jeepney driver who lost his home and belongings when Tropical Storm "Ondoy" (Ketsana) struck the metropolis in 2009 won the 6/45 Megalotto jackpot prize of ₱23,340,160.80 in the March 23 draw.

Accompanied by his son, the lucky bettor from Cainta, Rizal, went yesterday morning to the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO) at the Philippine International Convention Center in Pasay City to claim his prize.

According to PCSO General Manager Jose Ferdinand Rojas, the winner had placed a ₱20 bet on the winning combination of 12-34-18-39-32-24.

"Ever [though] he and his family lost everything in Ondoy, he said he kept the faith and he always had this feeling that one day he would bag the jackpot. And he did," Rojas said.

He added that the man, who has two sons, was planning to use his newfound wealth to reunite his family and start life afresh.

### Forced to work abroad

"He said they lost everything and his wife and daughter were forced to work overseas for the family to survive. "But now that he won, he said he would ask his family to come back home," Rojas said. **DMDOY AG**

**TRAINING SESSION**
A man reaches his student in the art of self-defense at the Quezon Memorial Circle in Quezon City.

# Woman killed after being attacked by former partner

By Jeannette I. Andrade

A 21-YEAR-OLD woman was bludgeoned to death with a hammer on Sunday night by her former boyfriend who also took some electronics items, including a DVD player, he had given her.

The victim's current live-in partner was likewise attacked by the hammer-wielding assailant who told him, "Do not move, I will shoot you. I want the new video [player] you bought me," and other people are watching movies on it," apparently referring to the DVD player.

Sheryl Ariel Cesar, a resident of Mcintosh Street in Muntinlupa, Manila, died a few minutes before 10 p.m. at the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center from a fractured skull while her boyfriend, 47-year-old mariner Gilbert Medes, suffered fractures on the arm when he tried to defend himself.

Manila Police District (MPD) operatives have started looking for the man who attacked them. He was identified as Delo Cesar's former boyfriend, Antonio Ibe, a.k.a. Tobo—accepted but not before he took personal cell phones and a DVD player from the couple's house.

PO2 Giovanni Nakes of the MPD Homicide section said the suspect happened at around 1:1 p.m. on Sunday.

According to him, the couple were watching movies inside the bedroom on the second floor of their house when their former common-law-live-in-gone-by door.

Delo Cesar went down to see who it was. Minutes later, Medes heard a loud thud which prompted him to go see who Delo Cesar was.

As he was about to go down the stairs, he was struck with a hammer by Antonio. Although stunned, he was able to fend off the repeated blows until the attacker ran away. He then went to Delo Cesar's bedroom and found her lifeless body on the floor.

He immediately brought her to the nearest hospital where she died while undergoing treatment.

Operatives of the MPD homicide section and their team conducting follow-up operations to apprehend Ibe.

# Pasig police need more phone lines, but where is budget for it?

By Nina Calleja

THERE can be the books.

At the newly-built headquarters of the Pasig police, who like to call themselves "the Pasig Elite," many of the officers lack the most important and basic equipment of all—the telephone.

Because of unpaid bills, only four telephone lines are working. Its other officers and operating units have opted to use handheld radios, said Senior Insp. Enrico Mangilo, chief of Pasig police's logistics branch.

No phone can be seen even at the front desk where a police officer receives complaints from the public.

Only the Tactical Operations Center, office of the police chief, traffic unit, and the logistics office of the Pasig police have working lines.

Mangilo said their PLDT telephone lines have been disconnected since August 2009 when they moved into a new home on C. Raymundo Street in Sumilang Barangay.

Three police chief Senior Supt. Napoleon Villegas decided to install a Bayantel wireless phone in every office, funded in part by the Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE).

However, the majority failed to pay the bills and no longer wished to apply for reconnection, Mangilo said, adding that he had no idea about the amount of the arrears.

He said the National Capital Regional Police Office would only pay for their phone bills if there are short-term leases from PLDT.

"We made several requests, but nothing happened," Mangilo said. The video-surveillance from entire south had not available lines in the area.

Supt. Enrico Evardone, Pasig's deputy police chief for administration, said they had to reduce the number of telephones because of financial constraints.

"I wish there was more support from the LGU [local government unit] because the MOOE budget from the Philippine National Police is limited," he said.

Mangilo admits that the lack of telephone lines can affect police work especially when it responds to emergency situations.

But he was quick to add that handheld radios, rather donated by the city government, do the job just as well.

The city pours tonnes of Pasig residents, the P1,000 monthly allowances of the 500 Brgy policemen and the 2,100 liters of gasoline he its mobile cars every month.

**FIRE DRILL**
A fireman trains his hose on a burning pile of wood during a firefighters competition in Manila on Sunday. Demonstrations occur during the annual firefighting month of March to Pay attention to observing safety measures and knowing many more!

## METROBRIEFS

### Ex-Navy man loses P500,000 to thieves

A FORMER member of the United States Navy lost nearly P500,000 in cash and valuables to thieves who broke into his condominium unit in Bacolod City the long Tee weekend. Case investigator PO2 Noel Jaquester said the burglary victimized Melvin Lovineria, 52, a retired off of a private company in the Makiwalo Hills in Barangay Tabacalera Village. He told the police that he left his unit at around 4 p.m. on Sunday. When he returned from house later, he found that someone had broken into his house. The missing items included three laptop computers, several expensive watches, a gold ring, a cell phone, $500 in cash, his US passport and other documents. The complainant told the police that he suspected that the burglary was done using false keys since there were no forced entry to his property. Lovineria told police that he saw the caretaker cleaning the floor while he was sent was located at the time he left. In addition, the speaker has been accusing cause the burglary took place.

*Julie R. Acosta*

### Couple injured in attack, robbery

A COUPLE was seriously hurt after they were shot by a group of unidentified men on their way home on Sunday night in Pasay City. Police said Lucy Gonzales, 40, the owner of a ready-to-wear shop, remains in critical condition after she sustained a gunshot wound in the head. Her husband, Hernando, 42, was also wounded after he reportedly tried to fight off their attackers. Initial investigation showed that the shooting took place at 8:40 p.m. on Kalaw ng Street in Pasay City. The suspects, driving a Honda Civic, intercepted the victims' car from behind. Moments later, several men snatched the woman's shoulder bag containing a still undetermined amount of money. They immediately fled with their loot. However, the police said that while robbery appeared to be the motive, they were also looking into the possibility that the attack on the couple may have something to do with the woman's business.

*Dino C. Santos*

### No work, school today in Paterno

THE MUNICIPALITY of Paterno declared today a non-working holiday for all public and private business sectors as it commemorates its 111th founding anniversary. At the same time, Mayor Joey Medina, who signed Executive Order 2011-01 for the purpose of commemorating Araw ng Paterno, declared that there would be no classes in the city's private and public schools today. In his executive order, Medina said that despite the many significant dates in the history of Paterno, March 29 is considered "Araw ng Paterno" since it was on this day in the year 1900 that Paterno was officially declared a municipality. A homerule celebration depicting the cultural heritage of the town's early has been prepared as by the local government.

*Dino C. Santos*

# Ping Lacson rides again

SEN. Ping Lacson rides again!

Instead of asking for forgiveness from the public for refusing to confront himself to custody, while he appeal was being heard in the Court of Appeals, Lacson even boasted about his 13 months in hiding.

He even instigated that Senator Miriam Defensor Santiago ward off the media for a supposed canvas campaign against him.

Tapanes is the lawyer of former Senior Supt. Cezar Mancao, principal witness against Lacson in the abduction-murder of publicist Bubby Dacer and driver Emmanuel Corbito.

According to Lacson, Tapanes had a huge PR chore to sustain the black propaganda against him.

The senator projects into another rebuttal for [illegible].

Here, who has plenty of money?

How much did he spend for transportation in going from one country to another, for hotel accommodations, for food and entertainment?

Don't tell me everything was free.

How ironic that Lacson was reported to have fiddles in Senator Panfilo Lacson's house in connection with the Philippines.

That's also the country where his enemy Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, reportedly has a big estate.

Just to cite things got hot for the downpour there.

If he really is innocent, why

**ON TARGET**
*Raymund Jalla's*

did Lacson run away when the Manila Regional Trial Court issued a warrant for his arrest?

As a senator who testifies, he should have submitted himself to the rule of law by having himself placed in custody while the case is being heard in court.

He should not give an excuse that under President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo he would not have a fair trial, to be candid.

Why didn't he surface after Arroyo was gone?

Why did he continue to hide?

---

One of the Court of Appeals justices who quashed the warrant of arrest against Lacson is always seen with a lawyer who last presiding court in the appellate court.

I'm not saying that justice talked with Lacson's lawyers concerning the Dacer-Corbito case.

I am just saying that the service is always seen in the company of a lawyer who has pending cases in the Court of Appeals.

It's fellow justices, according to my media, Justice admonished him about being seen in public places with the lawyers.

Justices and judges are supposed to shy away from the paying eyes of the public, and should not be seen with people who could influence them in their decisions.

---

Lacson's alleged participation in the abduction and murders of Dacer and Corbito has been considerably weakened by the Court of Appeals.

The appellate court, in quashing the arrest warrant against Lacson, said that prosecutor Leonardo Cruz Manuel is not a credible witness.

Manuel's statement is the basis for the indictment of Lacson in the Dacer-Corbito double-murder case.

Manuel claims Lacson, who was Philippine National Police and President of Ante-Organized Crime Task Force chief at the time, ordered Bubby Dacer eliminated.

The Court of Appeals has virtually acquitted Lacson, even before his trial by the lower court.

---

Most people are asking me what the amazing discovery was in Puerto Princesa's Underground River that I didn't mention in this space last Thursday.

I said that I didn't want to pre-empt Puerto Princesa City Mayor Edward Hagedorn who would make the announcement next week.

But yesterday, Hagedorn told me that the discovery is of such nationwide and even world—significance he would rather President Noy make the announcement.

# Sick baby boy needs surgery

By Santiago S. Alvarez

ELIZABETH CRISTOFF Gonzales, a five-month-old baby, was born with biliary atresia, a life-threatening liver disease in which white blood cells invade the bile ducts, causing damage to the organ.

Baby Gaye was so badly damaged that she

CONSOLES

needs a transplant as soon as possible," Reinnelle's aunt, Yolanda, told the reporters.

According to Yolanda, she and the baby's parents, Annie and Ricardo Gonzales, are Dumaguete residents.

"We went to Manila to look for kind souls who could save Reinnelle's young life," she said, adding that the baby's parents are financially very poor. Reinnelle is only 18 while Annie is 22 and earns a living as a tricycle driver.

The couple needs P700 million for the liver transplant, Yolanda added. She can be contacted at 09228220402, 09163924579 and 09209220603. Donations can be routed through her joint bank account with Baby Reinnelle at Metrobank (account number 246-3-24849844-6) or in Annie Gonzales' joint bank account with her sister at Banco de Oro (account number 0178119976).

# 4 hurt as panic hits LRT passengers

From page A11

the train right away and did not wait for the automatic doors to open. They were through the broken glass doors and windows," Pamela Nicolas, QTD, public relations division head, said.

What was supposed to only be a minor technical problem, was magnified by the panic-stricken gripped train passengers, she added. It was that panic-stricken passengers, she added. It was that panic-stricken gripped train passengers, she added. It was that panic-stricken gripped train passengers, she added. It was that panic-stricken gripped train

# Syria says armed gangs to blame for slays, tries to ease deep crisis

CAIRO—The Syrian government tried to ease a grave political crisis on Sunday by blaming armed gangs for killing 32 people in the northwestern port city of Latakia in previous days and promising to lift a draconian emergency law that allows the government to arrest and detain people without charges.

Despite an announcement that the president, Bashar Assad, would address the nation this day night, he stayed out of sight, as he has during the more than a week of unrest that is threatening his near 11-year presidency and more than 40 years of his family's iron-fisted rule. At least 61 people have died during antigovernment protests in several cities.

The capital, Damascus, was quiet during the day, offering a measure of calm at a time of uncertainty. Speculation over high-level conflicts raged as Syrians retreated to their homes, fearful of massive protests and bloodshed. There were rumors of cracks within the inside leadership of the nation, while the government sent out scampering messages of compromise and crackdowns.

There is no clear picture over what, if anything, the government was planning regarding the emergency law. A government official told reporters in Damascus that it would soon be repealed. But the official did not explain what it would mean to remove the emergency law, in place since 1963, given that so many other laws restrict freedoms and grant immunity to the secret police.

"What will change is nothing," said Radwan Ziadeh, a Syrian human-rights activist and legal expert teaching at Georgetown University in Qatar.

What was certain was that the crisis was far from resolved by sunset on Sunday.

The city of Latakia was sealed off by security services and the military one day after volunteers and human-rights groups reported that government forces opened fire on demonstrators and protesters. That flare-up of violence came after days of protests in the south, starting in the city of Daraa, where government forces also opened fire, killing dozens. The protests began after the police arrested and held a group of young people who painted antigovernment graffiti.

Details of the unrest, as well as exact numbers of the dead, are uncertain because the government has blocked reporters from Syria.

But human-rights groups reported that the death toll nationwide was 61 even before the killing began on Saturday.

"Yesterday was a terrifying situation in Latakia," said Ziadeh, who said he had stayed in close touch with relatives in Syria. "More than 32 have been killed."

The Assad family has wielded power through a complex alliance of intimidating intrusive services, the Baath Party, the Alawite sect and other religious minorities, including Christians, and an elite business class.

The rash of events may be especially interesting to the leadership because they have unraveled in two strongholds of the leadership. Daraa is a majority Sunni tribal region that has long been a base of support for the elite; it is the home of key leaders in the military and the government, including the vice president, Farouk al-Sharaa.

Latakia is one of the few places in the country that has an Alawite majority. If the unrest spreads to major cities, where there are fiercest majorities, another said, the entire regime could become unhinged, as happened in Tunisia and Egypt, where the presidents were forced from power.

"It's over; it's just a question of time," said a Western diplomat in Damascus, speaking on the condition of anonymity to avoid offending the diplomatic protocol. "It could be a other hour, or God's half-empty insanity over the next few days. It's very ironic here, very tense. You can feel it in the air."

The crisis is the second, and most serious, to face Assad. His brother Bassel Assad had been the heir apparent to their father, Hafez, but he died in a car accident. At first, Bashar hated, a British-educated eye doctor then only 34, was seen as a potential source of change after his father's heavy-handed rule, which relied on brute force and no option.

But many promises of change have stalled, especially political change. The Baath Party spoke Assad promised in campaign rallies, and the state still functions with at least the intelligence services, a military court and a state security court, and Article 36, which, according to Ziadeh, says, "Employees of intelligence services should not be held accountable for their actions committed during their job."

New York Times/News Service

MOM'S first-hears wears headphones to listen to white noise downloaded by her parents in an attempt to get Tanya to stop crying, at her home in Queens, NY. She fed and quietly for a few minutes, and recovered crying. AP

## *Folk remedies for colic do not work, review says*

By Lindsay Tanner

CHICAGO—That nonstop crying of a baby with colic has some parents turning to popular folk remedies. Unfortunately, there's no good evidence they work, according to a review of 13 studies.

The results don't surprise Amy Rak-City-based lactation, 32, who cried many treatments studied, including fennel extract, sugar drops and massage, and says nothing worked for baby Amy, who cried almost nonstop for six months.

"Our daughter would wake up and cry literally morning to night without stopping," Cohn said. "She would just literally scream herself purple, and then throw up because she had been screaming so much."

Cohn and she and her husband couldn't accept what doctors told them—that there was nothing wrong with their baby and that she'd outgrow the crying spells. But that's exactly what happened.

And that's what most doctors believe about colic, which affects up to roughly 20 percent of infants, usually in the first few months of life.

If a physical problem can be found, the condition is usually not considered colic. Colicky infant cry persists although no other medical condition that can cause digestive upsets and crying spells is found, and are often mistakenly called colic.

That stray explain why some remedies thought to ease digestive problems don't work for infants with true colic, including elimination treatments containing fennel, herbal teas and probiotics, which all were included in the study reviewed.

Alternative remedies are not tested and approved by the federal government, and the purity and amounts of their ingredients are not always verified. Parents should always check with their pediatrician if they plan to give their children an alternative treatment, said Dr. Jatinder Bhatia, head of the American Academy of Pediatrics nutrition committee.

The study by researchers at the University of Exeter in England was published earlier on Monday in Pediatrics. The researchers analyzed results from 15 studies on various alternative remedies, massage and chiropractic methods advertised as effective against colic. Overall, almost 1,000 infants were studied.

Five of the studies were rigorously conducted and all had "major limitations," the researchers said.

"Thus, the notion that any form of complementary and alternative medicine is effective for infantile colic is currently not supported from the evidence" studied, they said.

None of the studies reported side effects, but one involving an herbal remedy listed vomiting, diarrhea and rash as other symptoms and urged substitute, better research is needed to provide conclusive evidence, said researcher Rachel Perry the review's lead author. AP

# Merkel party faces loss after nuke stance shift

BERLIN—Chancellor Angela Merkel's conservatives Christian Democrats on Sunday seemed headed for a major defeat in a historic stronghold in southwestern Germany, where the Greens Party appeared poised to head a state government for the first time, according to official preliminary results.

The nuclear calamity in Japan and Merkel's subsequent reversal on nuclear power played a key role in the elections in the state of Baden-Württemberg, where the Christian Democrats have governed since 1953, before Merkel, 56, was born.

Most Germans have a deep-seated aversion to nuclear power, and the damage at the Fukushima Daiichi plant in Japan has galvanized opposition. On Saturday, more than 200,000 people took to the streets of four big German cities to protest a decision last year to extend the life of nuclear power. The news from Japan of soaring radiation levels led the major radio and television newscasts on Sunday.

After the catastrophe in Japan, Merkel reversed a precedent policy that she adopted just last year and temporarily shut down seven of Germany's 17 nuclear plants. She apparently did not convince voters that her change of policy was sincere.

At Christian Democrat headquarters in Berlin, there was shock as the preliminary results were announced. "This is very, very bitter," said Norbert Lammert, federal education and science minister.

At their headquarters across town, the Greens were jubilant even their projected 25 percent of the vote. Winfried Kretschmann, 62, who stands to head a Green-led coalition in Baden-Württemberg, spoke of "a historic change."

According to the preliminary results, the Christian Democrats won the most votes, about 39 percent, down from 44.2 percent in 2006. Yet the weak showing of the Free Democrats, the predominant party with which Merkel governs in coalition, left the conservatives no hope of forming the new state government.

The Free Democrats looked likely to squeak into the state legislature with just 5.3 percent of the vote, the minimum required. In 2006, they got 10.7 percent.

If the polls are confirmed, the Greens are in a comfortable position to head a coalition with the Social Democrats in Baden-Württemberg, which has some 11 million residents and is among the most prosperous and successful of Germany's 16 states.

The Greens are projected to win 24.2 percent of the vote, compared with 11.7 percent in 2006. The Social Democrats were forecast to take 23.1 percent of the vote, little changed from 2006.

"If the results are confirmed, then this is a major breakthrough for the Greens," said Nils Diederich, a political science professor at the Free University in Berlin. New York Times/News Service

CINDERELLA of Gstaad, incredible real Black Forest clothes, queue to cast their ballots in Gstaad, southern Germany on March 27. AP

# Berlusconi to appear in court for fraud trial

MILAN—Italy's Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi is required to appear in court for the first time in almost eight years on Monday in a trial over alleged fraud over the acquisition of television broadcasting rights.

The constitutional court lifted Berlusconi's immunity from trial earlier this year, exposing him to three corruption trials. Berlusconi is also Italian broadcasting empire and a separate trial is expected to be around of hearing on with an espionage prosecutor.

The last time the 74-year-old prime minister appeared himself in court was in January 2010.

Prior to the constitutional court ruling in January, the court had been frozen due to a law which allowed him to claim that he cannot be with his official duties to prepare his defense adequately and avoid trial.

He and several other people including his son Pier Silvio Berlusconi, who is deputy chair of Mediaset, are accused of fraud and corruption over the acquisition of television rights for inflated prices.

The defendants reject the accusations.

None of the facts on which the Milan prosecutor's have built their case are true," Prime Minister Berlusconi said in a telephone interview on Italian television on Monday ahead of the hearing which is due to start at 8 a.m. GMT.

When asked if he would attend other hearings as part of a change in his defensive strategy, Berlusconi said "I will go to those in which I can present myself, seeing is not required the trials because all the trials are absolutely absurd and built on nothing."

A separate trial in which Berlusconi is accused of bribery is expected in Milan but would not the premier did not appear in court. AP

BERLUSCONI

# Stars slighted on Internet can get help on website

LONDON—Imagine you are a well-known person aggrieved by how you are portrayed on the Internet. The digitals Wikipedia entry for the unflattering gossip item, the endlessly repeated story about how you cheated on your spouse when in fact you were blindsided by a scheming splitwise friend who was choking on an olive.

Being a too stressful and quixotic. Besides, it's the Internet. How can anyone erase the indelible? Are sources of a news website called Exposer "people who feel unhappy about Wikipedia misrepresentations, misinformation and what some might call social lies," is the words of the site's founder, Ike David Tang, can now attempt to set the record straight.

The superlegal service is jam-packed with stops where at every place you'll have real chance at you," said Tang, 56. "Can you afford to have it all sink and out try to clean it up?"

Tang mentioned about their reputations can use the site to post statements corrections as they wants, for $1,000 a year. Browsing through the posts is free.

Here is the actor Stephen Fry, releasing a report that he children Caledon. Here, businessman Richard Caring noted that he did not unduly fail to sum up as an important luncheon (it was a misunderstanding).

Meanwhile, Chris Huhne, MP of former Prime Minister Tony Blair, did not appear at a party wearing the same dress as the actress Daphne Bowtrier, did not go shopping with Shannisse Gadhafi's son, and never declared that attempt "it on more a threat than a man's hand."

Sienna Miller clarified that she is not on "former Tommy Hilfiger never and that he did not want black people to wear his clothes. And, despite what you may have heard, Viscount and Viscountess Linley were not talking in a tearful discussion about their second wedding. They were, the viscount writes, "just waiting for our car".

Kindred were for this month and has about 31 founding members, or contributors, as they are called, plucked mostly from the pages of Tang's very other level of acquaintance. Anyone can join, with payment and proof that he is who he claims to be; the site does not post items from nonmembers.

New York Times/News Service

# Duch: I was only following orders in slay of 15,000

PHNOM PENH—Lawyers for former Khmer Rouge prison chief Duch called for his release on Monday, saying at an appeal that he was only following orders when he oversaw the deaths of some 15,000 people.

Duch, whose real name is Kaing Guek Eav, was sentenced at Cambodia's UN-backed war crimes court in July of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role at the notorious torture prison Tuol Sleng in the late 1970s.

The Red Khmer Rouge cadre is face an international ovation, he was sentenced to 30 years in prison, and both defense and prosecution are appealing against the punishment in a three-day hearing at the court.

During his trial, the jailer repeatedly apologized for overseeing mass murder at the detention center—also known as S-21—but shocked the court by finally asking to be acquitted in November 2009.

Duch's Cambodian counsel Kar Savuth told the Supreme Court Chamber that his client had only the "very lowest rank" in the communist party and was simply following orders from above.

"Duch was just a prison secretary who had no real authority to make decisions or to do anything contradictory to the directive or the order from the upper authorities," he said.

The "superior orders" defense was most notably used at the Nuremberg trials after World War II, when it was ruled

KAING Guek Eav a.k.a. Duch

that is that it did not absolve Nazi war criminals of responsibility for their actions.

Duch's defense team argued that the tribunal had no right to try their client because he was not one of the regime's senior leaders, not one of those most responsible for the crimes committed.

"Duch was just a tool used by those people and he should fall outside the jurisdiction of the court[ for this reason]," Savuth said. "If there is any doubt [about jurisdiction] there is no reason[ should be acquitted and not brought to trial." Duch himself only briefly addressed the court. Wearing a white jacket and a powder-blue shirt, he said the main point of his appeal was the court's jurisdiction to try him, rather than questions of fact.

"So this is purely a legal matter. I give authority to my legal representatives to set an example[," he said, before returning to his seat.

It has tried the 68-year-old man initially given 35 years in jail but the court reduced the sentence on the grounds that he had been detained illegally for years.

Taking into account time already served, Duch could walk free in less than 19 years, if the dismay of many victims of the 1975-1979 Cambodian communist movement. AFP

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ganeo

# Libyan rebels push towards Tripoli

## Announce they are producing 100,000 to 130,000 barrels of oil a day

SIRTE, Libya—Sirte was pounded by coalition jets on Monday as rebels closed in on Moammar Gadhafi 's hometown in their westward push towards Tripoli and Nato took command of military operations in Libya.

An AFP reporter said nine powerful explosions early Monday rocked Sirte, 360 kilometers east of Tripoli, as warplanes flew overhead and the coalition operation to enforce a no-fly zone in Libya entered its ninth day.

The explosions followed two loud blasts on Sunday evening blamed by state television on an air raid by coalition forces.

Sirte is the next target of predominantly rebels as they push eastward to reclaim their eastern bastion Benghazi.

The rebels' pursuit of Gadhafi forces saw them wrest back control of key oil town Ras Lanuf and press on as far as Nofilia west Sirte, firmly in their sights. It also came under attack by what state television called "the colonial aggressor," hours ahead of US President Barack Obama's planned address on Monday in Washington to explain US involvement.

Witnesses in the capital said the strikes targeted the road to the airport 18 km outside the city, as well as the 4th Zara neighborhood on its eastern outskirts.

### Oil exports in a week

The rebels promised the uprising would not further hamper oil production in areas under their control, and the opposition plans to begin exporting "in less than a week," a rebel representative said.

"We are producing about 100,000 to 130,000 barrels a day, we can easily up that to about 300,000 a day," Ali Tarhoni, the rebel representative responsible for restoring finances and oil, told a news conference.

The rebels, on the verge of losing their Benghazi stronghold before the air strikes began on March 19, on Saturday seized back lightships and firings, 160 and 240 km to the west.

### Gadhafi loyalists routed

Spurred on by the air war, the rag-tag rebel band moves south-ar 190 km just firings to win back Ras Lanuf, routing Gadhafi loyalists.

Jubilant rebels mob up a poster of Gadhafi after they got the handle of Ras Lanauf and took positions at it with assault rifles in a green Libyan regime flag burned and a group of about 100 chanted, "Moammar, you're a dog."

"Gadhafi's forces are now scared rats," Mohammed Ali el-Mehdi, a bearded, 42-year-old fighter, said.

The rebels marked the takeover of Ras Lanuf with celebratory gunfire and fired rockets propelled grenade in a sign of victory.

Om of them, Aeia Hamad, 34, said insurgents were in full control of the town.

"All of it is in our hands," Hamad said of Ras Lanuf, which Gadhafi forces had overrun on March 12. Loyalists were "recovering on quickly, they are leaving some fighters behind."

Foreign ministers from more than 35 countries have so far confirmed they will attend a London conference on Tuesday to discuss coalition military action against Libya, Britain said.

### Many defections

Many Libyan diplomats and military leaders are defecting, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said.

"We have a lot of diplomats and military leaders in Libya who are flipping, changing sides, defecting," she told CBS television.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates said intervention in Libya was not meant to oil invasion, "not explained. "You had a potentially significantly destabilizing event taking place in Libya that put at risk potentially the revolution in both Tunisia and Egypt." AFP

REBEL fighters man an anti-aircraft gun near the oil refinery at Ras Lanuf in Libya on March 27. The rebels posted west on Sunday to recapture more territory abandoned by Gadhafi's retreating forces. AFP/AL

## *As fighters push on, Libya opposition prepares for power*

BENGHAZI, Libya—As Libya's rebel fighters push west, retaking towns they lost in government forces a week earlier, opposition representatives in Benghazi are trying to form a government on standby.

The task is difficult and delicate, being handled by an ethnic group of Libyans, many of whom returned from exile.

They have to contend with everything from poor communications to the uncertainties of those Libyans from all over the country who have lived through the Gadhafi regime.

At present, the official voice of Libya's opposition rests with the so-called Provisional Transitional National Council (PTNC), a group of 31 members representing the country's major cities and tribes.

Of the 31, the names of only 13 have been publicly revealed: council spokespersons argue it is still too dangerous to identify members in areas still controlled by Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi.

Even Mustapha Abdul-Jalil, the only spokesman former justice minister who heads up the council, is in hiding until fears for his safety. His number two, Abdul Hafid Ghoga, acts as the official spokesperson.

Beginning in the second is a collection of unanimous responsible for keeping rebel held cities running.

"We realized that we needed to have committees that could organize things," said Fathi Baja'ajha, an ambulance who is now a member of the council's media committee.

"And, more or less, we have managed to ensure that things are acceptable in the liberated cities. People have gone back to their jobs on time last month and we are working to make sure they are paid on time this month, too."

Now the committee working on forming a real cabinet, complete with ministers empowered to talk to their counterparts in other countries.

"We need an entity that is more organized and can really hold institutions," said Benghazi.

Colleague Mustafa Gheriani, another member of the council's media committee, put it this way: "You can think of the PTNC as more of a legislative body, and the new executive body will be the transitional government that is put in place either when Tripoli falls or before," he said.

Gheriani would like to have seen the executive body formed sooner.

But some within the PTNC reportedly initially resisted creating any kind of government while western parts of the country remained under Gadhafi's control, for fear of appearing to have established an "eastern government." The PTNC will create, and it is the symbol of unity," said Bagaglia.

And as more territory fell to rebel hands, positions in western cities could be added to the government, he added.

Forming the cabinet also required being sensitive to those Libyans who regard the recognizing rebels with suspicion or scrutiny.

"Everybody has to trend a very fine line," said Gheriani.

"I think the non-Benghazi cities will understand we had to move forward, but the T was here from day one, where were your? It is most difficult to overcome."

The initial cabinet is expected to be headed by Mahmoud Abril, a former professor who, as a rebel representative, has already met with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

The defense ministry is expected to go to Omar Al-Hariri, with former economy minister Ali Tawori taking charge of foreign relations. AFP


# WHY HAIRLOSS IS A NIGHTMARE

**HAIRLOSS is one of the most dreaded turning points in a man's life.**

From sporting a full head of hair to suffering from a receding hairline, thinning hair or baldness. It can happen as early as the puberty stage or as late as beyond 40s. The onset of thinning hair or receding hairline is when men start to look older, become less attractive or simply appear dull or boring. Experts agree that hairloss brings huge physical impact to men but what makes it more distressing is its psychological effect.

For **Joey Marquez**, losing hair is like losing his potency and vigor. "The first salon to impress a woman is the appearance. Hair is part of it. How can I make poems when women called me losing because of my hairloss? I tried not to let it bother me, but the truth was it did," he says.

Lack of self-confidence, insecurity and low self-esteem are just some of the psychological effects of hairloss. For more than a decade, **Mark Gil** suffered from baldness. "I envied men with fuller hair. With my bald spot, I didn't want to watch myself on TV. One film critic commented that my acting was always superb, but I needed to do something about my hair problem," he recalls.

Genetics, stress, poor nutrition, certain medications or diseases – these are the most common causes of hairloss in men. **Allan Caidic** left he had no escape from hairloss. It runs in his family. "When my hair thinned out, nobody escaped both sides of my parents

Mark Gil

Joey Marquez

Allan Caidic

have hairloss history. And yes, hairloss made me feel self-conscious," he shares.

Joey, Mark and Allan are just three among the many millions who have hairloss stories. But unlike other men, these three had a happy and successful ending. They beat hairloss with professional help – only with **Sveneaux**, the leading hairloss and scalp centre in the Philippines. It offers technologically advanced treatments for reversing hairloss or balding and thinning hair problems like Joey's and Allan's. For advanced baldness like Mark's problem, Transdermal Cosmetic Reconstruction (TCR) is perfect for you.

Joey says: "With Sveneaux's treatments, I started to see my hair becoming thicker, healthier in just three weeks. Now, no more receding hairline for me. I look 10 years younger!"

Mark says: "Sveneaux's TCR made my hair restoration possible. It's non-surgical and undetectable even to the probing touch. It's like my own hair. I always forget that I was once bald."

Allan says: "I didn't have confidence in over-the-counter products. There might be adverse side effects. So I sought professional help at Sveneaux. I'm happy with the results. My colleagues say, 'Coach, ang kapal na ng buhok mo!'"

Get thicker, healthier hair again. Live a better life. Call Sveneaux now at **892-HAIR (4247)** / **234-0861** Cebu for a FREE private consultation.


# Taliban kidnap dozens; bomber kills 13 people

KABUL, Afghanistan—Insurgents kidnapped 40 men in an ambush in the northwestern province of Kunar on Saturday, Afghan officials said. And a suicide bomber killed 13 people and wounded 36 others in the eastern province of Paktika on Sunday, according to initial Nato reports, although the toll was still being assessed.

The Taliban quickly claimed credit for both episodes. In the kidnapping, they asserted that they had captured 36 police officers. Sar Gov. Shams ul-Rahman Tahiri, the police chief of Marawara province, where the men were from, said the group was made up of "youths" who wanted to become police officers but had not yet been accepted.

They were passing through Kunar after having been turned away from a police training center in the Surgamai district in Nuristan, where they had tried to enroll but had been told there was no room, the general said.

"We told them, we can't enroll them now because all of our positions are full," he said. "We don't have enough spots for them also in the small administrative structure the Nuristan center has. We wrote down their names and their contact information and told them we would contact them if we needed to recruit more police."

Tahiri said the men were in civilian clothes and were unarmed.

The group was traveling in buses (vehicles in the Chapa Dara district in the mountainous east of the province when they were stopped by militants on Saturday.

Zabihullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesperson, insisted in a statement that the captured men had documents, including recent police academy graduation certificates, showing they were police officers.

New York Times News Service

IN THIS ISSUE


- Peso more competitive in '10, say BSP officials /B5
- AgriNurture seeks to raise P2B /B6


Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Carmie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

# PH lags in attracting foreign investors

## INDICATORS

**PESO-DOLLAR RATE**
March 28, 2011
43.450

**STOCK MARKET**
March 28, 2011
38.17

### Stocks end higher

BELOWPAR GLOBAL investors and contrarian stock plays led the charge for an upbeat stock market opening yesterday.

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index gained 38.17 points or 0.66 percent to finish at 5,819.58.

The day's advance was led by the financial and property issues, which both scraped more than 1 percent. All other sectors save mining and oil also closed up.

Value turnover amounted to P4.38 billion. There were net foreign selling of P182 million for the day.

There were 75 advancers as opposed to 46 decliners and 46 unchanged stocks. Take stocks Digi.ph and PLDT led the day's gainers, followed by Digiphil's parent firm JG Summit. Shares of Digiphil actively traded as investors bid on expanding corporate fundamentals, while some speculated on a potential merger and acquisition play.

Digiphil, the most actively traded stock, surged 10 percent to P1.83 a share while PLDT also gained 0.58 percent to P3,438.

Gaining stocks Metro Bank, Universal Robina and Alliance Global were likewise up on favorable prospects for the profitability and core businesses. Bank giant SM ventured to service new clients along Manila Bay by year's end while Alliance Global's Newport Mall of Asia ran across from Nasa'i is planning a bigger share of the gaming business, consequently setting into the movement of state-run casinos.

Other stocks that traded for monthly highs Manila Jockey, Ayala Land, Metro Pacific Investments, Semirara Mining, Manila Water, Ayala, DMCI and SM Prime Holdings.

On the other hand, EDC, Cebu Air, Manila Power, First Holdings and Globe Telecom traded in the red.

*Doris C. Dumlao*

## Vietnam, Singapore, Thailand top Asean survey

By Dexter L. Luzon

THE ASEAN region has become a more attractive destination for foreign investments and trade in the aftermath of the global economic crisis due to its potential as a market for goods and services, according to a survey commissioned by the 10-member body.

At the same time, however, the survey showed that the Philippines remained one of the least preferred investment destinations for foreign businessmen in the region over the medium term due to perceived limitations of the local market in terms of growth potential.

According to the survey commissioned by the Asean Business Advisory Council (Asean BAC), the Philippines ranked 9th in terms of investment preference—ahead only of Brunei—in the 10-nation survey with Vietnam leading the pack as the most preferred destination for foreign investment over the next three years.

This was followed by Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Laos, Myanmar and Cambodia, in that order.

At least 85 percent of the survey's respondents said their firms have plans of expanding in at least one Asean country over the next three years.

The survey was conducted recently by the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy at the National University of Singapore and covered 355 business respondents from across the region, but predominantly from Singapore and Thailand.

About 67 percent of the respondents ranked the countries due to the growth potential of their local markets, followed by the presence/size of their main clients or suppliers.

On the whole, however, prospects for the region looked rosy despite the competition offered by China as an investment destination.

According to the survey, about half of the respondents named the Asean as the most attractive location in the world for their firms' offshore direct investments between 2008 and 2011, with China pulling in the rest of 20 percent of the surveyed firms.

A majority of small firms (defined as those employing less than 10 people) presented one of the Asean countries to offer the best prospects for their offshore investments, while a higher share of large firms (more) China as the most attractive market for the sale of goods and services over the next three years.

"The survey results are out.

*Pia Lee-Brago*

## Gov't urged not to worry about 'hot money'

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE WORLD Bank said the Philippines should refrain from worrying about rising foreign portfolio investments, which are usually short-lived and speculative in nature, arguing it should instead be bothered by its riskier investments here.

Andin Dowsley, one of the bank's lead economists, said the Philippines remained a biggest among developing Asian nations as far as job-generating investments by foreigners was concerned.

He said the amount of foreign investments that generated jobs and that flowed into the Philippines was anemic and comparable only to those going to low-income countries.

"The challenge for the Philippines is to translate these inflows into long-term investments," Dowsley said in a video press conference last week on its latest assessment of Asia Pacific economies.

In 2010, foreign portfolio investments to emerging Asian economies, including the Philippines, surged to record highs.

In the case of the Philippines, net inflow of foreign hot money exceeded $4 billion, or more than 12 times the $300 million registered the previous year.

Analysts said this was partly due to the robust economic performance of the Asia-Pacific region, which grew much faster than the average growth for industrialized countries.

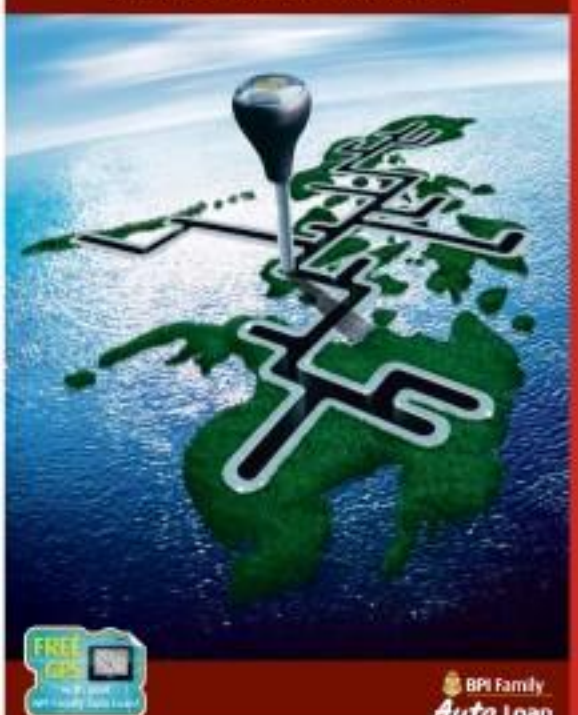
The significant increase in hot money inflows elicited concerns among Asian policymakers as the foreign portfolio investments pushed the values of Asian currencies against the US dollar, which government then said could eventually cause a decline in interest rates in Western economies.

Monetary officials were also concerned that the short-term and speculative investments could cause asset prices to bubble.

But while some developing

*see it on*


The Republic of Auto Madness.




160

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# First Gen net income up 27% to $121M in 2010

## Strong contribution from gas, hydro units

By Rico T. Dilotsandro

FIRST GEN Corp. of the Lopez family yesterday reported that its consolidated net income rose 27 percent to $121 million last year from P95 million in 2009.

It added that attributable net income to the parent company rose 10.6 percent in 2010 to $70.2 million from the P36.7 million posted in 2009.

Consolidated revenues likewise jumped 21 percent to $1.2 billion from $1 billion, the listed power company said in a statement.

"The substantial increase in earnings was driven by the strong operating performance of the First Gas group, First Gen Hydro Power Corp., FG Hydro and Energy Development Corp. (EDC). These developments were complemented by the positive effects of the company's deleveraging program," according to First Gen president Elmer Pana.

First Gen said the reliable dispatch of First Gas' 1,000-MW Santa Rita and 500-MW San Lorenzo natural gas-fired power plants drove the revenue surge from the sale of electricity.

However, the higher revenues were offset by corresponding increases in the pass-through fuel charges to its electricity offtaker and higher operations and maintenance fees paid to Mercuria Power Operations Inc.

First Gen said there was a notable increase in equity in net earnings from associates.

EDC, the country's biggest operator of geothermal-fired power plants, contributed $92.5 million in 2010 from $91 million in 2009.

The improvement apparently resulted from the full-year effect of the operation of the 192.5-MW Bacman plants and 112-MW Tongonan geothermal power plants. EDC's receipt of VAT tax credit certificates and its lower deferred taxes.

The improvement in earnings was, however, partially offset by the impairment booked by EDC's 49-MW Bacman-3, Sogod geothermal power plants and lower revenues from EDC's Unified Leyte geothermal power plants complex.

Adding to the positive variance was FG Hydro's income-contribution, which grew to $9.9 million from $1.5 million.

"This increase was due to better prices in the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market and higher dispatch of the hydro plants," First Gen said.

The increase in EDC and FG Hydro's earnings contribution was completed with lower interest expenses at Red Volcano Holdings Corp., the company that directly owns 40 percent of EDC. In 2010, Red Volcano trimmed its debt by 68 percent to P6.1 billion from P13.6 billion.

## Now what?

MARKET RIDER

*Bert Sisolerat*

THE CONSENSUS on the direction of our market today may be skewed to the existing assessment on the impacts of the earthquake and tsunami that hit northeastern Japan and the ongoing wave of uprisings in North Africa and the Middle East on the world economy. They may not be as basic as to affect the already difficult readjustments of the world economy in the long term but they may lead to further consolidations of stock prices in the medium term as they trigger price volatility.

The picture of the market may look simple to handle as described but could be tricky in reality. It could cause you to suffer whipsaws or be simply sold out of position at the losing end.

### Unknown variables

One overriding reason why the kind of trading predicament could happen is that the price events that occurred have given rise to other variables that may develop into independent factors that could alter the market picture as described in the foregoing proposition.

For instance, the problem with the damaged Fukushima plant in Fukushima, Japan, could become more difficult to manage due to complications that have arisen. The new problem by itself could altogether turn the already grave situation worse.

As of late, it is reported that local contamination due to radiation is that strong. It is feared that the radiation problem may rise into a nuclear-energy crisis in the proportion of Chernobyl, thus, adding more to the complexity and gravity of the problems in what it originally was.

In a word, this eventuality can expand its damage and extend its ill-effects to other countries whose economies may have significant dealings with Japan.

The same is true with the political uncertainties that is spreading across North Africa and the Middle East. If not handled properly, they could serve as a tipping point that could drive oil prices higher as to seriously affect the economic recovery that is underway in the three world markets.

Therefore, these variables could bring about serious consequences of unknown proportions that can totally change the market's complexion.

### Support, resistance levels

Nonetheless, it appears that recoveries over the said events in Japan, North Africa and the Middle East have started to subside. Last Friday, the market closed at the 3,871.04 level after it fell to as low as 3,839.88 the week before.

Within the last two weeks, too, we had big block index and crude sale transactions at the main board, indicative of the fear of what is generally happening in the markets. There is still investors' confidence; these transactions are also showing us into what sectors of the economy those big investors are committing their money in a big way.

These stocks were: Energy Development Corp. (EDC), Globe Telecom Inc. (GLO), Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (TEL), Manila Electric Co. (MER), San Miguel Corp. (SMC), Ayala Land Corp. (ALC), Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPI), Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), Bank Corp. (BDO), SM Prime Holdings Inc. (SMPH), and Leisure & Resorts World Corp. (LRC).

Most remarkable in the above transactions was that of SMC. On March 16, Wednesday, there was a block sale of SMC involving 301,666,675 shares. The transaction was equivalent to about 10 percent of the outstanding shares of the company. It was carried out in three transactions at the identical price of P79 a share or a total amount of about P23.9 billion.

The price was a bargain. It was less than 50 percent of the closing price of SMC last Friday of P167 a share.

Quite noticeable that happened, too, out of the 10 trading days of the last two weeks, foreign buying outweighed foreign selling to a tune of nine to one, indicative of foreign investors' feelings that the market may have already bottomed out.

In view of these obtaining circumstances, the present support and resistance level of the market can be established: major support could be placed at the 3,688 level of the benchmark Philippine stock Exchange index or 3921 while immediate support could be more or less at 3,798, with market resistance at the 4,040 level or just below it.

### Bottom line spin

In my recollection, big volume of buying transactions transpired within the 3,900 to 4,000 channel. Market momentum, then, appeared strong. It was poised to produce a market run that could result into a market breakout and resumption of the bullish trend of the market that started in mid-last November last year.

Being caught in the reverse market direction due to the recent events, they could now be looking for opportunities to sell.

This makes the technical observation that the 4,000 index level may continue to remain as the market's resistance level.

As a result, the market never totaled lower than the 3,798 level since the start of the year. The lowest it went to was at 3,721.20. This happened on Feb. 11, Friday. Since then, the market has been trending sideways to upwards.

But continued market performance that base on these aforementioned events like what has been happening as of late on Wall Street may lead to a stronger local market momentum that may finally break the resistance level of 4,000 to 4,040.

However, this may not happen yet. Other factors such as the market are yet too undefined. Therefore, the market may continue to trade sideways.

On second thought, the long-term outlook of the market remains bullish, looking at the growth of economies of countries following natural or man-made disasters.

To my mind, this means that if you have some "patient money" (long-term), you may continue to "buy selectively on price dips."

You may reach the *Market Rider* at market.rider@inquirer.com.ph or through at www.tsipatibok.com.

## PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

## COMMODITIES

## PH lags in attracting . . .

From page B1

mentioned by the individual investments of Asean-BAC members from their engagement in various national and regional fora," Asean-BAC chair and Indonesian representative Anangga Sheilendra-wardhani's statement.

"The investor briefings have helped [us] tremendously in our provision of feedback and policy recommendations to Asean leaders and economic ministers last year," he added. "This final survey report will also be presented to the Asean at-large process for information."

As such, the group has proposed a number of measures to ensure full and timely implementation of their commitments in the so-called Asean Economic Community blueprint.

## Gov't urged . . .

From page B1

Asian countries save an enormous amount of foreign hot money. They likewise were screened out as crease in inflows of foreign direct investments, which were seen to generate more jobs and boost economic growth.

The situation of the Philippines was rather different, however, as the country sees foreign direct investments including last year, down 23 percent from $1.96 billion the previous year.

Iavarello said the Philippines should take advantage of the increase in inflows of foreign hot money by implementing measures that could encourage these investors to transform their money into long-term and job generating investments.

He said measures over the potentially ill-effects of a surge in hot money inflows should be explored by efforts to make the funds work for the Philippine economy.

# Indian firm keen on investing in power project

## SkyCable launches new broadband Internet offer

By Paolo G. Montecillo

CABLE PROVIDER SkyCable has launched a new broadband Internet service that offers high-speed Internet access at a price it believes Filipino users are willing to pay for.

In a briefing on Monday, the unit of nonwire giant ABS-CBN Corp. said its monthly plans P999, which offers speeds of up to 3 megabytes per second (mbps), is expected to be a "game-changer" in the country's broadband sector.

"What people want is speed but they are also looking for a good price point," said Ray Mendoza, SkyCable's marketing head.

He said depending on how well this new offer would be received by the market, the company may planning to keep bringing down the prices for even higher connection speeds.

"We want to see how this offer performs, but in the future, maybe we can even come out with a 12 mbps plan if there's a market for it," he said.

Montecillo said that at P1,000 a month, users now get connection speeds of only around 1 mbps from other service providers.

What allows SkyCable to offer higher speeds, he said, was the acquisition of wider bandwidths. For the plan P999, users will be allowed 15 gigabytes (GB) worth of Internet use per month.

For an extra P1,000, the limit is raised then doubled to 30 GB.

Montecillo said there are 15 GB per month, users are accused of virtually unlimited access to social networking sites or to watch an 120 hours of video streaming on sites like YouTube.

"We feel this is a step in the right direction. We are giving more the opportunity to improve speeds that they desire, but were previously unafforded, able for them," he said.

SkyCable's broadband services, operating under the brand Sky Broadband, are available in less than half of Metro Manila.

The company said it was currently focusing more of its spending for the year on the expansion of its network to make it available to more users.

## Planned solar-fired plant to cost $100M

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—An Indian company plans to put up a solar-powered power plant worth $100 million (P4.3 billion) in this city.

City Mayor Jed Patrick Mabilog said Asia Pacific Communication Association (APCA) Global Ltd. had formally expressed its plans to set up the plant which would generate 10 megawatts (MW) this year and another 15 MW by 2012.

Mabilog said in a telephone interview on Monday that he recently met with representatives of the Indian company and that he would meet with them again early next month to further discuss the proposed investment.

Company officials have surveyed prospective sites in Barangay Ingay in the city to build its Lapuz District, the mayor said.

Mabilog welcomed the proposed investment saying this would bring additional power supply to the city from a clean source.

The city's current power demand ranges from 75 to 82 MW.

It is supplied by diesel plants of Panay Power Corp. and the 164-MW coal plant of Panay Energy Development Corp.

Both PPC and PEDC are subsidiaries of the Global Business Power Corp.

The city operates as a hub is significant. It increased in recent years due to the influx of business process outsourcing (BPO).

Business groups earlier said that additional investments in the city have been hindered by unstable power supply.

## Green Intervene to set up HQ in Muntinlupa

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The Colonnade Tower
Barangay Wack-wack, Ortigas Avenue
Mandaluyong City, Philippines

## INVITATION TO SUBMIT EXPRESSION OF INTEREST AND TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

**OUTSOURCING OF THE OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF LIGHT RAIL TRANSIT AUTHORITY (LRT) LINE 1 AND METRO RAIL TRANSIT (MRT) LINE 3 SYSTEMS**

1. The Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC) invites interested firms and entities for the bidding of a four (4) year period, extendable by one (1) year, contract of services, functions, facilities, and associated resources for the Operation and Maintenance of the Light Rail Transit (LRT) Line 1 and the Metro Rail Transit (MRT) Line 3 Systems. Funding for this subject contract shall be provided by the Government of Philippines (GOP).
2. Prospective bidders should have completed a similar single contract with a value of at least 50% of the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) and should meet all other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents.
3. The procurement of the required services shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures provided for by Republic Act (RA) No. 9184, otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and IRA 9857 as amended by RA 7716, and their Implementing Rules and Regulations.
4. Any firm or entity interested in the project must submit formal expression of interest (EOI) not later than 15 April 2011 accompanied by payment of a non-refundable fee of TEN THOUSAND (Php 10,000.00) PESOS through the address given below. Interested parties may likewise obtain further information from the said given address and telephone number or thru e-mail address rw@dotc.gov.ph.
5. Eligibility documents shall only be issued to firms and entities which have duly submitted their respective formal expressions of interest and paid the required fee on time.
6. Tender documents shall only be issued to firms and entities found eligible to participate in the tender stage and payment of appropriate non-refundable tender documents fee.
7. The schedule of submission of eligibility applications and tender documents including other dates and basic data pertinent to the procurement proceedings shall be duly provided later to those which have submitted EOI.
8. DOTC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bid(s), to annul the bidding process and to reject all Eligibility Documents or Bids, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

**THE CHAIRMAN**
Special Bids and Awards Committee (SBAC)
Office of the Undersecretary for Planning and Project Development
15th Floor, The Colonnade Tower
Wack-wack, Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City
Tele/Fax No. +632 7231588

(With Annex B & C; 4 pubs; 4/4)

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First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Lumban, Laguna
Tel. Nos. (049) 501-4475; Telefax: (049) 501-4008
E-mail Address: flecc_1972@yahoo.com

## INVITATION TO BID

The First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc., with office address at Brgy. Lewin, Lumban, Laguna, invites all qualified bidders to bid for its **material requirements** intended for the construction of Single Phase Primary and Secondary Line for SAn Lorenzo Brgy. Bukalsa, Santa Maria, Laguna with a total estimated cost of the following:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Single Phase | + | 1.296 Kms |
| Single Build | + | 1.121 Kms |
| Open Secondary | + | 0.304 Kms |

All interested parties can secure bid documents from FBAC Secretariat starting March 29, 2011 after payment of a non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00). Submission of sealed bids will be on April 13, 2011 (Tuesday) at 3:00 PM at FLECC Main Office, Brgy. Lewin, Lumban, Laguna.

Request further to include in your sealed bids/proposal the delivery date, terms of payment and availability of stocks for evaluation purposes. Bid for one item at a time is acceptable. The BID BOND to either in the form of cash or cashier's check equivalent to two and one half per cent (2.5 %) of the total bid price.

FLECC RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPT IS BIDS ONLY DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

**EMELYN C. CAMARSA**
FBAC CHAIRMAN

Noted by:
(Sgd.) ENANGELITA S. ESTAÑA
FINACTING GENERAL MANAGER

(With Annex (a to d); 4/4)

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**BATANGAS II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**
Antipolo del Norte, Lipa City

## INVITATION TO BID

WHAT : Bidding for the Supply and Delivery of Kwh Meters, Calibration/Test Equipment and Various Transformer Accessories
IFB 2011-008

WHEN : April 4, 2011 (Pre-Bidding Conference)
2:00 p.m. (SHARP)

WHERE : BATELEC II Main Office Basement
Antipolo del Norte, Lipa City

Cost of Bid Documents : Php 4,000.00

For inquiries, Prospective Bidders may call FBAC Secretary, Engr. Ann Grace P. Alongalay at (043) 756-4337 local 156.

(Sgd.) **ROSYL D. MAGPARANGALAN**
Procurement, Bids and Awards Committee Chairperson

(With Annex B & C; 4/4)

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BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Cebu Capitol, Cebu City

## INVITATION TO BID

The Provincial of Cebu, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective registered bids and accredited by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to bid for eligibility to bid for the transaction covered.

| | |
|---|---|
| Name of Contract | **RECLAMATION PROJECT** |
| Location | New Cebu International Bridge, Pilar Extension, Cordova, Cebu |
| Approved Budget for the Contract | ₱ 100,000,000.00 |
| Date of Publication | June Periods |
| Duration | 240 calendar days |
| Minimum Equipment Requirements | |

| Description | Quantity |
|---|---|
| Dump Truck 10 cu. m. capacity | 2 units, owned/leased |
| Backhoe, 0.76 cu. m. capacity | 1 units, owned/leased |
| Pontoons, 10.00 m. x 4.00 m. | 2 units, owned/leased |
| Steel Barge, 30.5 m. x 9.0 m. | 1 unit, owned/leased |
| Compressor, 4 barrel | 1 units, owned/leased |
| Generator Set, 100 KVA | 1 units, owned/leased |

Prospective bidders should possess the following: a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract; have submitted a similar contract/ies in a value of at least 50% of the ABC; and must have submitted its audited financial statements for the preceding calendar year not earlier than April 15 of the current year. Bidders should also submit the list of equipment and personnel to be assigned to the contract; and other appropriate requirements as listed in the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) Revised Guidelines and Procedures.

All pertinent data relative to Eligibility Statements and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

| | Activities | Schedule |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Issuance of Bid Document(s) | March 29, 2011 |
| 2. | Pre-bid Conference | April 5, 2011 |
| 3. | Submission of Letters of Intent and Application for Eligibility/Eligibility Documents (Bidding to open) | April 6, 2011 (09:00 AM to 03:00 PM) |
| 4. | Opening of Bids | April 19, 2011 (10:00 AM) |
| 5. | Bid Evaluation | April 19, 2011 |
| 6. | Post-qualification | April 20, 2011 |
| 7. | Notice of Award | May 10, 2011 |

For single stage bidding:

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **Five Hundred Pesos Only (Php 500.00) for CATEGORY A** and **Three Thousand Pesos Only (Php 3,000.00) for CATEGORY B** to the Department of Health – Center for Health Development – Cariaga in cashier facility.

The Department of Health – Center for Health Development – Cariaga assumes no responsibility whatsoever to corporations or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **FLORENCIA G. TESORO, DPA, Ph.D.**
BAC Chairperson

(1x; Ad; 4/4)

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**BOHECO - I ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.**
Cabulijan, Tubigon, Bohol
Fax No. (038) 508-8386, Tel. No. (038) 508-8511, 5084731

## INVITATION FOR BIDS NO. 2011-04

The **BOHOL I ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (BOHECO-I)** thru its reinvestment and general fund intends to procure various electrical materials and equipment to be used in our coverage area:

**Lot 1 - Equipment - Pangtao Substation 69kV Line Tapping Point**
**Lot 2 - Pole Line Hardware**
**Lot 3 - Connector Compression, Made in USA**
**Lot 4 - Electrical, VOltage Meter, 1-Phase, 240V, 60Hz.**
**Lot 5 - Misuse Billing Materials**
**Lot 6 - Fuse Link, Nonreusable Head, Made in USA**
**Lot 7 - Wire, Duy, 3/8", 7 Strand, Galv. Steel, 6X6**

Note :
* For Imported Items*

a.) Only those manufacturer, exporter, distributor from manufacturer are qualified to participate in the bidding and they must submit "Certificate of Origin".

Sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the above-mentioned materials shall be received by BOHECO-I at its main office in Cabulijan, Tubigon, Bohol on or before April 18, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. at which time and place the said proposal will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their representatives. Bid Documents are available from March 30, 2011 during office hours (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday - Friday) until 5:00 p.m. on April 15, 2011.

The interested bidders may obtain information and secure list of bidding documents from BOHECO-I Main Office upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (Php 2,000.00).

(Sgd.) **DINO MEDILLA T. AYDAN**
Officer-In-Charge

(With Annex B; 4/4)

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# OBITUARIES

*Our Deepest Condolence and Prayers*

We to the Philippine Retirement Authority would like to extend our deepest sympathies to our Japanese retiree-members and to the entire Japanese nation.

We ask our fellow Filipinos and other PRA retiree-members to join us in our prayers for the repose of the souls of those who passed away, and for the safety of those in harm's way.

May this crisis pass and may the healing begin.

*Holy Masses this Sunday for the intentions of our Japanese retiree-members and of the entire Japanese nation will be offered at the following Makati City churches: Don Bosco Church (Ayala Avenue), Seminario de San Antonio (Forbes Park), St. Andrews Church (Bel-Air), Magallanes Church (Magallanes) and Sacred Heart Church (San Antonio Village).*

**Death Notice**

**LUZVIMINDA S. CUMPA**

*Passed away on March 23, 2011 at the age of 73.*

The family requests relatives and friends to continue praying for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in family residence in #128 Tolentino St., Hangos, Mandaluyong, Manila.

Interment to be announced later.

# Peso more competitive in '10, say BSP officials

## In NCR, prices grew faster in January

By Bernelyn Bonoan

THE RATE of increase in Metro Manila consumer prices in January quickened at a seven-month high of 3.5 percent year-on-year, according to the National Statistics Office.

The January rate was the highest recorded since the 3.5-percent posted in June 2010.

Data from the NSO showed that the increase in the consumer retail price index (CPRI) for the National Capital Region was due to a faster rate of surge in prices of food as well as mineral fuels and lubricants.

Showing the biggest change among the eight sub-groups in the index was food, which rose to 3.6 percent in January from 3.6 percent in December. Those for mineral fuels reached 9.4 percent from 8.1 percent.

The only other group to show faster rates of rise was beverages and tobacco, which grew 1.4 percent from the previous 1.2 percent.

The price uptrak for unrefined foodstuffs (raw materials) noted at 1.7 percent, the same as that in December.

Showing slower price hikes were chemicals (rate: percent from 1.3 percent), manufactured goods (2.1 percent from 2.2 percent), machinery and transport equipment (1.9 percent from 2.0 percent), and miscellaneous manufactured items (1.2 percent from 1.4 percent).

For the entire country, the overall rise in consumer prices reached a nine-month high of 4.3 percent in February.

Last week, monetary authorities pushed up key policy rates to keep inflation the expectation figure "well anchored" at a range of 3 percent and 5 percent.

However, Singapore-based BNP Bank said the government could raise its inflation goals as economy upward pressures would likely push the rate of consumer prices over 5 percent in the second half this year.

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE PESO was more price competitive in 2010 than in the previous year because it weakened in real terms against other currencies in the region.

As a result, monetary officials said the country's standing in the region helped boost performance of Filipino exporters.

In a report issued Friday, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas effectively refuted earlier claims that the peso's appreciation against the US dollar was hurting the country's export sector.

The BSP said that while the peso strengthened against the greenback last year, it fell against competing Asian currencies in real terms, thereby making Philippine-made goods more affordable compared with merchandise from neighboring countries.

"The peso gained external price competitiveness against the basket of (currencies of) competitor countries," the central bank said in its 2010 Report on Payments Report.

According to the report, the peso depreciated in real terms by 3.8 percent against currencies of South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Hong Kong.

The peso's standing in relation with other currencies in "real terms" is measured by taking into account the exchange rates of the peso against such currencies, as well as the difference of inflation in the Philippines from that of competing countries.

Exchange rates and price movements help determine affordability of exported goods.

The peso averaged at 45.31 against the US dollar last year, rising by 5.6 percent from 47.64 in a dollar the previous year.

The strengthening of the peso against the greenback prompted some exporters to complain about the ill effects on their sales performance. But among peso makers, Philippine-made goods were cheaper and thus less competitive, they said.

Filipino exporters urged the BSP in interviews in the exchange rate movements by buying more dollars to dampen the weaken the peso in order to ease the dollar.

But monetary officials insisted that concerns about declining competitiveness of Philippine exports due to the exchange rate was baseless, citing the fact that movements of other Asian exporting countries were moving at a faster rate than that of the peso.

They said the fact that the country's export income has year expanded by over 20 percent indicated that concerns over deteriorating competitiveness were unfounded.

The officials said the BSP was indeed buying dollars from the foreign exchange market, but added that the move was only meant to temper sharp and sudden appreciation of the currency.

## Currency's regional standing boosts PH exports

## *Exec calls for review of mining ban*

THE GOVERNOR of a southern province that imposed a ban on open-pit mining yesterday said that he would push for the country's major mineral resource rules even after he signed formal rules setting-off to implementation.

A review of the mining code could pave the way for the lifting of the ban that has forced the country's largest open-pit mineral gold project—the $1.9-billion Tampakan copper-gold project of global miner Xstrata Plc.

If not lifted, the ban could also derail coal mining operations of conglomerate San Miguel Corp. in South Cotabato province.

"I just submitted this ordinance. There's nothing I can do except to implement it, and it is now up to the Sanggunian," Governor Daisy Avance-Fuentes (provincial legislature) to review it," South Cotabato Gov. Arthur Pingoy told Reuters.

"Until the ordinance is amended or nullified, as the top local executive, I have to implement the ban," Pingoy said.

He signed the rules and regulations last week.

Fuentes' term ended this June office in May last year, shortly after the local legislature and his predecessor approved the ban—but sought the review immediately after he took office.

The 12-member local legislature was not against mining and was only worried the open-pit method would harm the environment.

Energy Secretary Jose Rene Almendras also called for a review of the ban, saying projects that could help restore Luzon power needs to the country's southern region could be jeopardized.

Almendras said the area covered by the ban had proven coal reserves that could generate electricity of up to 750 megawatts for 25 years.

San Miguel, which is now the country's largest power producer, has three coal mines in South Cotabato, having acquired miners Tagoloan Agro-Minerals Inc., Sultan Energy Development Corp. and Bonanza Energy Resources Inc. last year.

The provincial legislative board is waiting for Tampakan operator Sagittarius Mines Inc. to present the environmental impact assessment study on the project, Pingoy said.

Sagittarius Mines, a joint venture between Xstrata and Australian miner Indophil Resources NL, expects to submit the study within the first half of this year, said John Arnold, Sagittarius corporate communications manager.

Production at Tampakan is scheduled to start in 2016, with the largest undeveloped copper-gold deposit in Southeast Asia estimated to contain 13.5 million tons of copper and 15.8 million ounces of gold at a 0.3-percent cut-off grade. Reuters

## Leyte utility to carry out ₱400-M rehab

By Jerry Ealdama
Inquirer Visayas

TACLOBAN CITY—The Leyte Electric Cooperative II (Leyeco II), Eastern Visayas' biggest power utility, will undertake a 5-year rehabilitation plan estimated to cost over P400 million to bolster its service to member-consumers.

According to the utility's general manager, Jerry Lopez Canada, the rehabilitation plan will start within the year since it secures the approval of the National Electrification Administration (NEA).

Canada on Sunday said the plan would help lessen the power interruptions while meeting the possible power shortfalls in the future.

The five-year rehabilitation plan of Leyeco, which serves the towns of Babatngon, Palo, Tanauan, Santa Fe, Alangalang, Pastrana, Dagami, Tabontabon, Tolosa, Julita, Barugo, Tabango, Jaro, Carigara, Capoocan, Dulag, Mayorga, Tacloban City, Abuyog, Baybay, Hilongos, Bato, Matalom, Isabel, Kananga, Ormoc City, Albuera, Merida, Isabel, Kananga, Ormoc City, Albuera, Merida, Isabel, Kananga, Ormoc City, Albuera, Merida

# BUSINESS

## ROUNDUP

### IPVG sells stake in Proteric

LISTED TECHNOLOGY firm IPVG Corp. issued a solid part of its stake in US-based Proteric Technologies Inc.

It is disclosed, IPVG said the stake was sold to Korean iTurbines, a technology growth equity investor, for $13.86 million. An additional $2.68 million will be paid to IPVG from the sale of shares to management team members over an agreed upon vesting period. Also, IPVG will extend a $2.5 million loan to Proteric at an interest rate of 10 percent per year to support the company's expansion plans.

Founded in 2003, Proteric is the first company to establish global-scaling centers to drive CRADLE-to-GRAVE demand of services at locales in the Clinet. IPVG acquired Proteric for $13.5 million in early 2008.

### Climate action summit

THE PHILIPPINE Business for the Environment is holding today the Business Climate Action Summit at the Hotel Intercontinental in Makati.

The summit is a follow-up to the Philippine Climate Initiative in 2009 to 2010, which was a multisectoral effort to get the Philippines to take climate change seriously.

The Business Climate Action Summit provides dialogue panels that companies can undertake, to incorporate environment sustainability into their business operations. The projects to be presented already have proven track records that will enhance cost operations efficiencies.

The projects cover bioremediation, such as managing composite fleets, sustainable energy, including how to generate savings in energy consumption without affecting operations, solid waste management, sustainable urban, and agriculture and urbanization.

Joining PBE as event organizers are The Philippine Inquirer and Yahoo! Philippines. GMA Network, known for its commitment to green practices, is a partner, together with L.A. Tuason and Co. Inc. and Earth Day Network.

# AgriNurture seeks to raise ₱2B

## Equity infusion, borrowings

By Doris C. Dumlao and Nico T. Cichocki

LITERATED FRUITS and veg-etables grower and merchandiser AgriNurture Inc. is raising P2 billion from a combination of debt and equity to expand its agricultural operations, build up a cold chain facility to reduce spoilage of crops and improve its distribution and revenue distribution.

The fundraising, which may be split between debt and equity depending on market opportunities, will cover the company's capital spending program for the next five years, ANI chief executive officer Antonio Tiu told reporters yesterday.

"It can be 50-50 percent but it can also be 60-40 percent [debt] depending on market conditions. If the market is strong, we'll raise more money from equity," Tiu said.

The equity portion of the fundraising will begin with the sale of ANI's shares to existing investors via a stock rights offering worth as much as P676 million. This is to be supported by a follow-on offering to investors.

ANI, listed on both the Philippine and American stock exchanges, expects to upgrade to listing on the Australian stock exchange to the main board from the small and medium enterprise board after handling the A$1 billion income level required for main board listing, Tiu said.

But given the shaky waters from Japan, Tiu said it would be difficult to say whether the company would rely more on equity than debt to fund its expansion.

Subject to the ratification by the stockholders, ANI declared to the PSE plans to issue as much as P3 billion worth of corporate bonds with a maturity of five to 10 years.

In terms of demand for agri products, however, Tiu said the great earthquake from Japan might have some positive impact on local agribusiness as other countries would likely seek alternative sources of agricultural products. This will benefit the Philippines, especially in high-value fruits and exotics.

In 2010, the bulk of ANI's produce went to the domestic market (60 percent). "This year, exports will be substantially bigger than domestic sales. Ghi na is expected to contribute a lot to the growth," Tiu said.

WELL-DRIED GRAIN MEANS HIGHER INCOME A farmer belonging to the Manobos Farmers Association in Manticao, North Cotabato spreads corn to dry on a grains solar dryer built by GMAdel's Grameen-style Equity in Microfinance (GEM) Program under its Barangay Infrastructure Project (BIP). The dryers help reduce crop losses and improve the quality of the dried grain, allowing the farmers to sell their produce at a higher price. To date, GEM has completed 1,200 BIPs, including 200 solar dryers, throughout conflict-affected areas in Mindanao. BIPs include water systems, grains warehouses, boat landings, footbridges, community multitrading centers, and bridge and roadway upgrades or repairs.

# NGCP calls on public to help protect transmission lines

By Paolo G. Montecillo

NATIONAL GRID Corporation of the Philippines (NGCP) is asking angry consumers the health of the country's power lines is on now that households and business customers enjoy reliable services.

But the transmission network operator, owned by the son and namesake of tycoon Henry Sy, said the public should also do its part in helping protect the country's electricity grid to avoid power outages similar to what hit key parts of Metro Manila over the weekend.

"It was an isolated incident and not a pattern of any major power outage or recurring 'brownouts' this summer," NGCP spokesperson Cynthia Perez Alabastro said in a statement, referring to the power supply disruptions last Saturday.

Alabastro said the company's transmission network had already been improved to avoid transmission congestion in the Luzon grid, which was one of the main causes of frequent power outages last year.

Last Saturday, a 500 kilovolt transmission line was tripped, leading to a power outage in some parts of Metro Manila and Luzon.

The incident was caused by a grassfire in Barangay Sumacab, Cabanatuan City in Nueva Ecija.

"The cause is clearly not a transmission problem or technical constraint on the part of the NGCP but a physical fault which is beyond our control," Alabastro said. "This is an isolated incident that could have been avoided if we can all work together in helping safeguard our transmission lines."

The company said it could not prevent the 118,000 kilometers of transmission lines it is operating to maintain by itself, especially with the summer season underway when grassfires are common.

"The NGCP is requesting the public's assistance in preserving the lines in their respective communities," Alabastro said.

Aside from providing consistently existing lines, Alabastro said planting trees or putting up houses near transmission facilities was also discouraged. These obstructions, she said, could cause power outages when they come in contact with lines.

She said NGCP completed in September an upgrade of the substation that was affected by the grassfire on Saturday.

The San Jose substation can now handle 25 percent more electricity, giving it "more than enough" capacity to restore and transmit power to Luzon soon.

# BPO sector eyes new markets

NOT WANTING to rely on the United States for all of its business, the local business process outsourcing sector is stepping up its push to enter new markets, including untapped shores as the US and potential customers in the United Kingdom and Asia Pacific.

According to Jollibee Japan Plaoio, executive director for information and research of the Business Processing Association of the Philippines, the Asia-Pacific region, in particular, was an area of very huge potential.

"Because of the growth rate for Asia Pacific region, there's now a big demand [for BPO services]. We're trying to capitalize on our language capabilities. The biggest demand is for Mandarin, Japanese, Thai, Bahasa and Korean," she said.

She said that because of the country's big population of Filipino-Chinese and native Cantonese, it was not very difficult to find Mandarin speakers. Also, the influx of Koreans studying English in the country could also be used to the industry's advantage by tapping them for jobs with Korean language requirements.

No clients requiring Japanese speakers, he said Japanese companies and organizations were conducting their own language training, but mainly to support Filipinos that were already working in Japan.

Shalik Parekh, president of IT-BT BPO firm 3PS Technologies, said it was about time to spread the Philippines' wings to other locations.

"For the last 10 years, more than 60 percent of BPO revenues have come from the US. Now we have to look at where else to get the revenues," he said. "For India, it has experienced higher growth rates in the Asia Pacific, particularly Malaysia and Singapore. Australia, New Zealand, and the BRIC [Brazil, Russia, India and China] countries are growing at a faster rate as well."

Apart from new geographies, Plaoio said BPO players were also increasingly turning to non-voice services, which earned far higher yields than voice. Abigail D. Ro

LIFESTYLE Wellness

# The taipan's daughter is a ballroom belle

STUDENT and mentor Rowena Tan-Chua and Belinda Adora

By Margo C. Enriquez
Circle Dancer

ROWENA TAN-CHUA is modest about many things (which other women would, ever—)rewarding Dad father is a taipan and her sister Wedenare Tan is known in the airline and society circles), business (she's in insurance and keeps mum about the rest), however, beauty (she's packing 50 but doesn't look it), and hosting orchestral ballroom dancing.

Since last month, Tan-Chua has loved dancing. The passion was unleashed when she visited her daughter in Sydney.

"I still looked pregnant. My husband encouraged me to get back in shape," she says.

Epic and social ballroom dancing helped her lose the excess water, but she had a hard time maintaining her weight loss. Eight years ago, friends who were into competitive dancesport suggested she take up international ballroom dance with our Belinda Adora.

"When she started with me, she just wanted to practice. But I saw that she had what it took to compete. She lifted it and got good results," recalls Adora, known as the "Philippines' Dancing Queen."

## Immersed in the studio

Tan-Chua's regimen now (April—practicing the Latin dances with her partner Sherwin Teodoro for warm up, an intense two-hour coaching with Adora, and more practice after the class.

Adora says her word picture fully immerses herself into the studio. Tan-Chua attributes her success to her patient partner and to Adora's discipline.

"Belinda is very strict and focused. She wants everything perfect."

When National Geographic TV made a documentary on dancesport's exodus in Asia, Adora represented the Philippines and chose Tan-Chua as one of her star pupils.

From a size 12, Tan-Chua dropped down to a size 6. How does ballroom keep one fit?

Adora explains that ballroom dancing is very ensuring.

"The lowest to the uppermost muscles are engaged—from the top of the head to the tip of the toe. In Latin dancesport, the legs, hands and body should be properly aligned and coordinated. Since you're dancing as a pair, you have to match your stance and pace. If one of you is not right, the dance is affected."

Dancing together needs a lot of practice.

According to exercise physiologists, vigorous ballroom dancing gets the heart rate up and burns 200 to 400 calories per 30 minutes. As a weight-bearing activity it builds the bones.

Take the mambo and the swing. There is energy flow (the human to the lower muscles) and help prevent osteoporosis. The arm to movements used by grandchildren to strengthen the back and core muscles.

It neurologists has said that ballroom dancing is beneficial to the brain as it keeps us exercising the mind to using the body's motor skills and to memorizing choreographies and working with the partner. The increased blood flow to the brain also releases the happy hormones.

Adora points out that Tan-Chua's assets are her strong legs and balance. She recalls that in one competition, the judges were appar-

Rowena Tan-Chua dropped from a size 12 to a size 6 when she got into competitive dancesport

ently watching Tan-Chua spin and twirl around the floor, expecting her to fall down.

"Rowena knows her strides, and she could hold on her own. If it weren't for the rigid ranking, she would have lost her balance."

Adora adds that Tan-Chua's only problem is her shape, as a result of being self-conscious about her heavy torso.

Wouldn't women love to have that problem?

## Higher points

Tan-Chua competes as often as four times a year abroad in the pro champ level. She's up against couples in their teens.

"My partner (Teodoro) is young. When he turns 35 next year, we can join the senior division, and I can be with my age group. For now I've been competing with couples who are younger than my kids."

Still, she manages to score higher points.

"They have the stamina and flexibility, while we have the maturity. I love the challenge of competing. I am being pushed to my limits," she says.

Tan-Chua admits she loves to eat. Sometimes her partner has to confiscate the cereals from her. Still, she manages to get into body-hugging costumes.

Says Adora, "Joining a competition gives your dancing a sense of purpose. You go all out. If there's no competition, it's very easy to lose."


# LOSE THE FAT.
## Go from heavy to healthy.

Having fat is exhausting. Your body feels heavy, your appearance looks lumpy, and most of all, it's very unhealthy. When you're overweight, you're prone to stroke, diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, certain cancers, and erectile dysfunction. Take fast action before it's too late. For quick and effective weight-loss, FOR MEN has proven solutions with long-lasting results. All treatments are guaranteed safe, non-invasive and pain-free with no downtime. Steer away from the health risks of being fat and start dropping the extra pounds right now!

### HARD-TO-LOSE POUNDS AND FAT

To drop excess pounds and stubborn fat, you don't have to suppress your appetite, do strenuous workout routines or go on crash diets. These do not guarantee your desired results anyway. Weight-loss doesn't have to be painful and difficult. Take the fast and easy route with Fat Mobilization System. It lets your body burn as much as 2,000 calories in 45 minutes while you're lying down. On top of that, the fat-burning can continue up to 48 hours after each session. It's now possible for men to relax and burn calories at the same time, thanks to FMS!

### BULGING BELLY AND STOMACH FLAB

In most men, the stomach is always the first to bulge out and flatten up. Unfortunately, no amount of abdominal exercise experiments can flatten your bulging belly or tighten your stomach sags. At FOR MEN, you can easily have a flatter and leaner stomach again with 3rPolar Tummy. It uses a highly-advanced radio frequency to shrink and flatten your fat cells as it tightens and smooths out sagging, wrinkly skin. One session only takes 30 minutes. It's express stomach flattening without hassle!

### LOVE HANDLES, BULGE AND BACK FAT

If you have love handles, bulge and back fat that are resistant to diet and exercise, your treatment is for you. CoolSculpting is the newest US FDA approved fat layer reduction and body contouring treatment that targets fat in specific areas of your body. It weakens, shrinks and eliminates your fat cells as it removes fat in your problem areas. Studies have shown a 22.4% fat layer reduction in the targeted area in just one treatment. Not only will you lose the stubborn fats, but you'll have a better-looking, re-shaped form!

Transform your body from heavy to healthy with our quick and easy fat-busting programs! Call FOR MEN at 813-7888 for a FREE private consultation today!

# ComicRelief



GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS

A. UPIN

BY JOS ASBERA

PUGAD BAABY

BY PH. LAYUGAN

DICK TRACY

LOVE SHOTS

BY ELIZABETH HOROWITZ

BABY BLUES

BY JERRI SCOTT

KIKO MACHINE

BY PAWIK ABRERA

SEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON

HUTTS

SHERMAN'S LAGOON

BY JIM TOOMEY

DUSTIN

BY STEVE KELLEY AND JEFF PARKER

TULDOG

BY MARA CELI

## HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCES DRAKE

**YOU BORN TODAY** It's difficult to put a quick take on you because you're so diverse. You're a combination of many, and so unpredictable. You have a strong will to keep others in line, but you're also a free spirit who doesn't like to be tied down yourself. You're educated, aware of the human condition, and you have a great sense of humor. You will let go of something that was important to your survival with far more ease than in order to make room for something new or even more powerful. **Birthdate** of Lucy Liu (actress), Jethro Tull, Mike Leigh (director), Amy Tan (author), Johnny Depp (actor).

**ARIES (March 21 to April 19)** Someone in a group setting is not showing up (page, screenshot), very likely a female. Sometimes social silence is your friend, whatever the situation calls for it and then some long-term goals.

**TAURUS (April 20 to May 20)** Good on the subway or bus, or in the car — however you're traveling. Be careful, however, of the urge to overdo it. You might want to think about your safety.

**GEMINI (May 21 to June 20)** This is an excellent day to make long-range plans about travel or anything having to do with higher education, publishing, the media, medicine, or the law. You won't overthink much.

**CANCER (June 21 to July 22)** Because you have excellent powers of concentration today, you're very good at dealing with complex matters, mechanical subjects, or just a task you love. You can get a lot done.

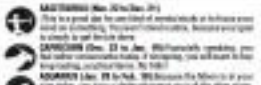


**LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22)** Disagreements with partners and close friends will be serious today, but they also will be productive. Be willing to compromise and adjust to your partner's needs. You will find a way to work together.

**VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22)** This is an extremely productive day for you. Whether you are in the office or at home, you're very efficient and can get a lot done. You will feel better about yourself as a result.

**LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22)** Romantic matters can sit down, today in Virgo on the 3rd house of love so time to spend with your partner. This is also a good day to learn something. Maybe go to a school, think of something.

**SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21)** An older relative, perhaps a parent, might have a worthwhile suggestion for you. It certainly doesn't hurt to listen. Even if



**SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21)** This is a good day for you to get out of your usual routine. Do something different. You don't have to take a vacation, but you need to stretch a bit. Be a bit more daring.

**CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19)** Romantic matters, you feel rather conservative today. If something, you will want to keep things pretty much the same. So, hide!

**AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18)** Because the Moon is in your sign today, you have a slightly enhanced sense of the other signs. Nevertheless, be careful and prudent in all your decisions today.

**PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20)** This is a wonderful day for romance. Put your fashion finest. Purchase wonderful presents or romantic gifts. Furthermore, you have the confidence to keep going in the future.

## CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

**HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU**

Fill the grid so that each row, column, and every 3×3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. For more programs or www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

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**Conceptis Sudoku** By Dave Green

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Difficulty Level ◆◆

## CROSSWORD PUZZLE

ACROSS

1 Bowl
5 Mexican dishes, for short
10 Big concert draw
14 Tuba player
15 Fuss
16 Tiny Tim's wife
17 Dance
18 Criminal mob
19 Lab work receptacle
20 Earthquake
22 Ambulance organization
23 Hairy rascal
24 Tiny bit (with "of")
26 Fuel (for cars)
27 Cut (off)
28 Cartoon "Who?"
29 Lesser-talented
30 Lesser-talented
31 Lesser-talented
32 Appliance company
33 Bumper load
34 Tiny bit
35 Tic-tac-toe loser
36 Tic-tac-toe loser
37 Unexpected difficulties
38 Parasite
39 Computer memory expansion
40 Regular writing
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5 Cause of an accident
6 Part of the Bible
7 Bowl-shaped flower
8 Bowl-shaped flower
9 Leading Quebec
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11 Private property
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# Yoga and sensible eating have kept this prima ballerina 'en pointe'

By Anne B. Jardines

LIFE IS not a "Black Swan" movie—at least not for prima ballerina Liza Macuja-Elizalde.

Where the movie is dark, Macuja's life is not; where Nina's character is psychologically disturbed, Macuja's got a good head on her shoulders, whose Nina is brooding, Macuja is all smiles.

If there's one thing Macuja can exhibit is, it's the patience for dancing—and the grit to achieve near-perfection.

"I always love to outdo myself from one picture moment to the next. I love the challenge of pushing my body," Macuja said.

But the pursuit of outdoing herself has taken its toll on her body. After 32 years of going en pointe, Macuja was diagnosed with chronic tendonitis and underwent surgery mid-December last year. The human body, after all, is not designed to stand on toes.

Seated behind her office desk and surrounded by silvery trophies from years of ruling the public Filipino playfully voted one big cup as the "ugliest trophy," with children candor, "Bakit me to show you my dead lovers?"

Through the years Macuja has maintained classic first-position on her left and right toes. (That's shadows for you and me), had a chipped bone after twisting her ankle from a fall when she was 17, and has had muscle ruptures, sprains and strains associated with performances and rehearsals.

## Damaged ankles

And now there's the chronic tendonitis. The surgery that repaired her damaged ankles, smeared her doctor, should give her bones five more years of dancing. Macuja, in fact, was already dancing January this year, only a month after surgery.

So how was she able to bounce back so quickly?

If you think ballerinas are thin, well, there's a reason for that. Ballet is so demanding on the body that a dancer has to keep his body tight to sustain the energy from dancing. Macuja keeps her body at its dancing-weight issue of 98-104 pounds. If she were a regular girl, her chest weight would be around 130 pounds.

Moreover, Macuja, 46, has always been diet and under-weight. The only time she gained weight aside from the time she was pregnant with her two children, was when she was a teenage ballerina in Russia. It was unintentional, the result of a bad diet and lots of sweets, since there was a scarcity of fresh vegetables and fruits. Despite the rigorous training, she gained 10 pounds.

"I've been dancing since I was eight. I'm lucky I have a job that keeps me fit so I don't have to make up some unnerving workout to go to the gym," she said.

She does go to the gym, but only to practice yoga. Her longtime dance partner, ballet master Orian Barroso, talked her into joining a yoga class two years ago. Can she do headstands? Well, no, not unless she's assisted by the instructor.

"I used to approach yoga like I do my dance—no pain, no gain. I want to push myself and I realized I was also overdoing injuries in my shoulder, upper back and wrists because of yoga," she said.

Gone in a while she gave unnerving workouts her family, but she's really just not into sports like soccer or running.

"That's not for me," she said, laughing.

## Oatmeal and bananas

But when she travels, she walks, and she walks so fast that her husband, businessman and actor Fred Elizalde, would often complain.

She also eats what she wants. She doesn't have a sweet tooth, but she loves creamy and chewy sauces and rich. The only culprit can be carbs because she wants to keep her weight down, but because she loves pasta.

But daily breakfast is cool: oatmeal and two bananas. But on cheat days, after a night of performances, she indulges herself with a cheeseburger and fries—for breakfast.

"Sometimes I eat an enormous cheese and I eat it with chips, and I'm happy. But I know when to stop eating. When I feel full, I stop. I think that's part of the discipline I got from dancing," she said.

She does carbo-load on pastas and breads during heavy days of dancing. But busy as she is, hours before a performance, she doesn't like to eat anything. "In order to dance well, I have to feel hungry. I like going on stage feeling hungry and energized with adrenaline. The jumping and turning for me is easier done on an empty stomach."

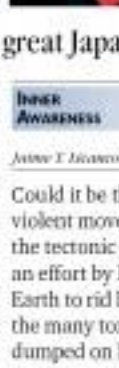
And she still gets the pre-performance jitters—more so now that more is expected from her. Another reason she doesn't like a performance is because she has "a responsibility to make those extreme movements.

"The high expectations make me nervous. When I was younger and less experienced, less was also expected from me. Today, people expect me to be perfect," she said.

Calling herself an "old ballerina," Macuja has learned to listen to her body. She knows the early signs of an injury and extinguishes it, and has learned to pace herself. She keeps a steady dancing schedule—that includes running her ballet Manila—that makes her work more efficiently, plan ahead and be prepared. And she promotions like roping her children and using fillers cumpert rehearsals.

"I have been dancing most of my life," she said. "It's a very physical activity, it's like a sport. When you use your body you rely on the strength of your body and of your touch. As you grow old-er, there's deterioration. I could not have portrayed my roles before."

Ballet Manila is accepting applicants, girls strong at passion aged 14-22, Mail 1810 Peronda St., Ermita City or call at nos. 525-9967 or 400-8292, or visit www.balletmanila.ph.



# The great Japan earthquake's message for mankind

INNER AWARENESS



Jaime T. Licuanco

Could it be that the violent movements of the tectonic plates is an effort by Planet Earth to rid herself of the many toxins dumped on her by man?

THE DEVASTATING earthquake that shook Japan in its very foundations earlier this month remembers us painfully of our universal oneness with the whole of mankind.

What happened to Japan made the world realize that no man is an island. By helping Japan in a time of great need, we say in effect helping ourselves. In the great mystic poet, John Donne, wrote, "Every man's death diminishes me, for I am part of mankind; and therefore never seeks to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee."

Marshall McLuhan, in his prophetic book "The Medium is the Message," saw the power of mass media to turn the whole world into a small village.

After the powerful Japan earthquake's nightmarish consequences in the air waves and headlines, a number of friends started asking me, what could all these events mean? Are these related to the apocalyptic visions of the apostle John in the Bible?

## The soul of the earth cycle

In this what the Mayan calendar prophecies have been saying all along, regarding the downturn in the end of the fifth Earth cycle which, according to some interpretation, will take place on Dec. 21, 2012? Or is this God's wrath for the sins of mankind?

I cannot give a definite answer to these important questions. I can only speculate, like the rest. And it may sound ridiculous and outrageous to some, but I believe that what is happening is that our dear Planet Earth is trying to find rid of the many wounds inflicted upon it, and the many toxins mankind has dumped on it.

You see, there is a fascinating theory, which I tend to believe, that Planet Earth is alive. It breathes and it thinks, not of course in terms of words or verbal language, but in terms of some cosmic, grid force or energy. The forests and caves are its lungs. And the soil is its blood. We have destroyed the planet's ozone as forests by denuding its forests, and we have also drained its blood by siphoning off its precious oil.

In ancient Greek mythology, the primordial earth was called Gaia, the goddess who gave birth to everything on earth. She possessed herself through parthenogenesis, not through sexual intercourse with a male creature.

The idea that the earth is alive was first proposed by James Lovelock in the '60s. A science from outer space, seeing our planet for the first time, according to him, will know it is alive.

## Process of transformation

According to a summary of Lovelock's theory, "About a billion years after its formation, our planet was occupied by a host of living things which began the process of transforming the planet into its own inheritance. All the forms of the planet are part of Gaia. In a very similar way to the myriad different colonies which make up our organs and bodies, the life forces of Earth as their diversity co-evolves, work together to maintain the reproduction and sustain the optimal conditions for the growth and prosperity, not of themselves, but of the larger whole, Gaia..."

And here is the most astonishing statement that has somehow to do with the present upheavals in Japan and the shifting of the tectonic plates, resulting in the changing shapes of the continents, may result from the massive heat release deposits left in the Earth by hot-brine eruptions.

Could it be that the violent movements of the tectonic plates, which cause quakes, is an effort by the living Gaia to rid herself of the many toxins dumped on her by man?

Stephen Hillier, in his review of Lovelock's thought-provoking theory, said: "Those of us who consider ourselves to be somehow outside of the birthing of the new age should consider Gaia, as well. The idea of Gaia may facilitate the task of convincing destructive human activities into constructive and cooperative behavior. It is an idea which deeply moves us, and as the ancient sage help us appreciate more the necessary jump to planetary awareness."

Note: The next Inner Mind Development seminar to be conducted by Jaime Licuanco will be held on April 9 and 10 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Room 308 Price Plaza, 509 Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City.

For details, please call telephone numbers 414-7214 or 415-8886 or text 0920-901-0962. E-mail jaimelicuanco@yahoo.com. Visit our website, www.pinoyyoga.com.ph.


Show your Xaverian pride and Enjoy perks too with the new AAXS-Allied Bank Platinum MasterCard

From L-R: PAASU President Leonid F. Velasco, Allied Bank Senior Vice President and Credit Card Head RVC Flores, Jr., and Magallon Cardino Chapter I Circle Charter present the new AAXS-Allied Bank Platinum MasterCard.

In celebration of our prestigious launch as official school credit & debit card, for calendar school year, Allied Bank launches as treat to grace school spirit while earning points and enjoying all the benefits as Allied Bank MasterCard cardholder.

The new AAXS-Allied Bank Platinum MasterCard is a customized credit card issued by Allied Bank exclusively for the alumni of Xavier School, named after Saint Francis Xavier, Co-Founder of the Society of Jesus (S.J.) in line with the Academic Association of Xavier Schools (AAXS) 20th anniversary celebration, held at the Xavier School Legado Hong Kong Multi-Purpose Center. The affair saw the formal assembly of the AAXS-Allied Bank Platinum MasterCard, presented by AAXS President A'XAVI I. Velasco and Allied Bank's Senior Vice President and Credit Cards Head RVC Flores, Jr. as the highlight of the event both Allied Bank and AAXS. AAXS-Allied Bank Platinum MasterCards were launched by the early 300 batch of graduates of Xavier School present during the launch.

The AAXS-Allied Bank Platinum MasterCard offers appealing benefits, prominently annual annual fee for cardholder Xavier School alumni. Cardholder benefits will be extended also to cardholder's dependents (spouse and child of the holder) exclusive of Allied Bank MasterCard cardholders.

Plus, cardholders can earn one (1) rewards point for every P50 spent and points may be redeemed to Mabuhay Miles and/or Cash Credit.

Apply now for your AAXS-Allied Bank Platinum MasterCard and show your Xaverian pride wherever you go.

To know more about the AAXS-Allied Bank MasterCard, contact Ally Lena at 0922-911-6178 or the Domestic Toll Free hotline at (800-10-888-8255) or the AAXS office at (02) 727-0000 ext. 440 or log on to www.facebook.com/groups/aaxsalliedbankmastercard

# Everyday ways to treat common ills

**Allergies**

There can make you miserable, mimicking the symptoms of flu...runny nose, weepy eyes, general body malaise, headaches, fever.

Allergy symptoms occur when there is an overreaction of the body's immune system to certain substances in the environment. No two persons are alike, too. One could probably tolerate cat or dog hair, while another could react violently.

What causes the symptoms? Histamine and leukotrienes, leukotrienes released by the immune system. These are mostly sensitive cells in tissues in the lungs, skin, throat, intestines and blood vessels. When these cells are exposed to irritable substances, histamine is released. The result? Contraction inside the body, which causes the extra production of sticky mucus.

Allergies are partly hereditary (however, there is a growing belief in the medical industry that a healthy lifestyle and nutritional supplementation could balance the immune system. These might help:

Vitamin C: A deficiency in vitamin C can raise your histamine levels. Studies show that vitamin C reduces inflammation and histamine levels. People with hay fever were better able to manage their condition on 2,000 mg daily. No surprise; it is water soluble. You could take 1,000 mg of calcium ascorbate or ester-C twice daily. Eat more bioflavonoid-rich foods like citrus fruits, broccoli, grapes, and green and red peppers.

**High blood pressure**

The three major bodily components of this condition are stroke, heart attack and kidney disease. Ralph is only 41 years old. Last year, his medical checkup revealed that he had high blood pressure—but his doctor did not bar salt from his diet.

This is because today based on research, salt is not the culprit. "A rise in blood pressure means you need to add minerals in your diet, not cut back on salt," says David McCarron, MD, professor of medicine and head of the division of nephrology hypertension and clinical pharmacology at the Oregon Health Sciences University of Portland. The problem of hypertension could mean a lack of potassium, calcium, and magnesium. How to manage this?

- Eat lunch on the salmon. If you are overweight, start losing the excess pounds.

Studies show that salt is no longer the sole culprit when it comes to high blood pressure –it's a lack of minerals

- Eat more fatty fish like mackerel and salmon, both high in omega-3 fatty acids, which seem to reduce blood pressure.
- Limit alcohol intake to two drinks a day.
- Limit the sweet stuff because sugar could raise your blood pressure.

Low sodium levels in your blood could make you lose consciousness. Don't eradicate natural salt (sea salt) from your diet, because the body needs sodium to survive.

**Osteoporosis**

There is a bone factory inside women's bodies, but by age 35, it stops remodeling the skeleton framework. That's because estrogen helps to diminish by this time. By the time women hit menopause and stop producing this hormone, significant bone loss has occurred (from one to seven percent during the first seven years). This is why osteoporosis is more common among women. How to manage this?

- Consider natural bio-identical hormone replacement therapy

- Take calcium-rich foods like milk, broccoli, beans, orange juice, tofu, butternut squash, sweet potatoes (carrots) and mustard greens.
- Remove aluminum-based antacids from your medicine cabinet. Aluminum may cause bone loss.
- Exercise daily.
- Do easy on salt which can stimulate urination and more bone loss.
- Cut back on alcohol. Studies have shown increased bone loss in men with chronic alcoholism.
- Beware of anything high in phosphorus, which blocks calcium absorption.
- Supplement: Not men aged 35-65, 1,000 mg of calcium; for women aged 25-50, 1,000mg; pregnant/nursing women, 1,200-1,500 mg; menopausal women aged 55-65 who are not taking estrogen, 1,500 mg; men and women over age 65, 1,500 mg.
- Vitamin D: Take in the morning too, and because sunblock and clothing can prevent sunlight absorption, go bare. Allow the sun to touch your naked skin, as the vitamin D is easily absorbed. Five to 15 minutes of sun exposure three a week is enough. Needed, or you can supplement with 400iu of vitamin D. (Note: vitamin D can be toxic if taken in excessive dosages.)
- Magnesium is an essential mineral needed to treat almost any condition. Even depression to a heart attack and bone problems. The role of this mineral is to remove calcium ions into the bones by converting vitamin D into its active form, according to Alan R. Gaby MD, author of "Preventing and Reversing Osteoporosis." Studies showed that women who took 250-750 mg of magnesium daily for six months and decreased change over 18 months experienced decrease in the rate of bone loss.

Magnesium-rich foods are green leafy vegetables, wheat germ, sunflower seeds, seafood, nuts and dairy products.

Beauty touch: Mix in a bowl a fresh egg yolk and 1/2 tsp milk, scramble and apply on the hair for a moisturizing mask. Leave on for five minutes, then rinse.

Affirm today: "I am as radiant as the sun."

Love and light!


## *Safe weight loss for the swimsuit season*

SWIMSUITS AND bikinis are making it make an appearance, as everyone is getting ready to enjoy the beach this summer.

With obesity also a growing concern in the country, however, weight loss has become far more than simply a cosmetic concern. Individuals who are overweight are at a serious risk of several health problems, including type 2 diabetes, coronary heart disease and stroke, certain types of cancer, sleep apnea and pregnancy complications, to name a few.

A combination of proper diet and exercise is necessary for a weight-loss program. But oftentimes, diet and exercise alone can't get rid of stubborn fat. Studies have shown that combining Xenical with the right diet can yield better results, compared to diet alone. Xenical prevents the body from absorbing up to 30 percent of the fat consumed in each meal.

Xenical is taken during each meal, or up to one hour after the meal. Individuals can safely take Xenical for up to two to three years, although noticeable signs of weight loss are seen within two weeks.

Some side effects of taking Xenical can include increased flatulence, abdominal pain, bowel movement, and oily, fatty, or liquid stools. However, these symptoms disappear if one continues the treatment and stays on a healthy low-fat diet. These symptoms are generally mild, occur at the beginning of treatment, and go away after a short period of time.

With Xenical, the pioneer weight-loss drug backed by over 10 years of medical research, you are sure to find a slimmer and healthier you, while giving you the confidence to don that perfect new bikini on the beach.

For more information, visit www.xenical.com.ph or text 0917-895-5498 during office hours.

# ENTERTAINMENT

Lira Ernnie G. Velarde

## 'Star Power' champ dislodges Willie

THE TOP SELLING album in the country for the week March 14-20 (based on Odyssey Music & Video's nationwide sales) marks the...

# Small clubs keep local music scene alive

By Pocholo Concepcion

THE RECORD industry is still reeling from heartstrokes brought about by the Internet revolution. But the music scene in Manila is alive, thanks to inspired performances in small clubs and concerts.

Recently the brainstorming and the old Tea 02 on Scout Florentino, Quezon City, now renamed Slacker Jam Kitchen, to find a full-house audience having fun watching the ASAP Big Band.

Featuring a seven-piece, instead of its grand 20-piece lineup), ASAP drummer Arnold Rut II could sound as vibrant as the original version of Quincy's "Soul-Bossa-nova Train" and Tower of Power's "So Very Hard to Go" (with guitarist Noel Santiago in dual singer).

The sound of its horn section, composed of Rommel Manguerra (tenor sax), Noriel Ostrizo (trumpet), Tots Tesalona (bone sax) Michael Bautista (alto sax) and trombonist Mel Villena (sitting in on baritone sax), stimulated one's blood stream with a shot that emitted a night burn in the heart—like the effect of fine wine or ganja.

Lately, the band starts hard to jam numbers with only seven blanket on vocals, before winding up with a flamenco-arranged, instrumental take on Freddie Aguilar's "Anak," which Villena dubbed "the most popular song in the world."

ASAP plays Mondays at Slacker Jam Kitchen.

### Retro pop-rock

At Serenata's on Jupiter, Makati, the band Mulatto Angry's weekend crowd feeling young despite its retro pop-rock repertoire that included Kenny Loggins' ("Whenever I Call You Friend"), Bill Withers ("Lovely Day") which is enjoying a resurgence after figuring prominently in a scene in the film "127 Hours"), Ambrosia ("Biggest Part of Me"), even Barry Manilow's Streisand ("Copacabana").

Although Mulatto still had vocalist Joey Bautista and drummer Patrick Diaz in its lineup, the cast were now minimalist. Its drum-less lineup of drummer Eric Zabalbero, guitarist Hans Mesquite, bassist Dante Bautista, saxophonist Harold Llanes, trumpeter Brandon Dionisio, and two more singers, JT Tenorio and Anne Amaro.

Amaro, who's only 15, a quite a find, has voice, style, vocals surely adapting to the songs' varying moods. "I first saw her singing [on Idol Kids' stuff' with another band," manager Ruel de Leon told The Inquirer. "Sabi ko, Ariffin, dyosmeta ko ng dyosa. If I told her, come join us, sing old songs!"

Dinilaga Amaro (on apparently) having fun with old music.

"Of all the bands I handle, Mulatto is number one," De Leon proclaimed before proceeding to join to Billy Joel's "And the Only You."

Really ha, we added De Leon, influencer, one of his other talents, noted Manila, as considered a solo artist here, when he's not recording and touring with the American band Journey.

Mulatto plays Saturdays at Serenata's.

### Henry K's originals

There's another worthy set that plies at Serenata's regularly: Henry Kahlung and Friends. Henry is the keyboardist any of the ubiquitously-ace player Eddie Katindig's The Brass (see musical) fam.

The capable lineup(s) could let pig. Henry's band included bassist Noel Asuncion, guitarist Ralph Bitsio, percussionist Dingdong Bongat, drummer Mon Dizon, saxophonist Dix Lanuza and vocalist Jhanne Bongat.

They sounded dynamic, their voice very confident. Most of all, their outfit is a solid and powerful message by playing two original songs: "Loving You" and "Cool Summer," both written by Henry, at the show's start.

Henry Kahlung and Friends plays Tuesdays at Serenata's.

### Cashing in on K-Pop

A concert obviously targeting the teen market, dubbed "K-Pop Explosion," will be held on April 3 at the Aliw Theater, Sen Gil Complex, Pasay.

We have yet to see how the three acts in the lineup—SLIEG, Pop Girls and KPH—perform. Apparently the members got to join three groups through auditions held by their record label, Viva.

Obviously these groups were formed to cash in on the current K-Pop craze (the concert's title, "K-Pop," is a dead giveaway).

As to whether the members' talents can match the youthful enthusiasm they showed during a recent meet with the press, we will leave on concert day.

### A real good singer

What we do know is that Marnie Ong is a really good singer who can only get better if his record label, which happens to be Viva Inc., puts him well.

His self-titled debut album was out last, actually. It's just that he needs more original material, whether from other composers or from his own efforts, in his next album.

Ong's first major gig on April 2 at the Music Museum should be interesting.

### Band and Zsazsa's roots

It was a full house at the start, either on small clubs while going to and fro," Ruel Valdez told the Inquirer on Friday. He says the group is to promote his concert with Zsazsa Padilla on April 20 at the Meralco Performing Arts Theater.

CLOCKWISE from left: Basil Valdez, Marnie Ong, Zsazsa Padilla, ARTZ's Band with Sharks

Basil Valdez's band with Sharks

Basil Valdez's band with Sharks

Basil Valdez's band with Sharks

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# 'Star Power' champ dislodges Willie

From page B1

**Overall**

1) Angeline Quinto, "Angeline Quinto," Star Records; 2) Willie Revillame, "I Love You," Viva Records; 3) Arnel Lavapas, "Goodbye Lolibelle," Sony Music; 4. Various Artists, "Grammy Nominees 2011," Sony Music; 5) Sy Ice Gerilt, "Speak Now (Deluxe Edition)," UMCA Music; 6) Various Artists, "My Popular Demand 3," Universal Records; 7) Bruno Mars, "Doo Wops & Hooligans," Warner Music; 8) Regine Velasquez, "Fantasy," Universal Records; 9) Various Artists, "Full Blast! Maximum Dance Hits," Ivory Music; 10) Justin Bieber, "Never Say Never: The Remixes," UMCA Music

**OPM**

1) Angeline Quinto, "Angeline Quinto," Star Records; 2) Willie Revillame, "I Love You," Viva Records; 3) Various Artists, "My Popular Demand 3," Universal Records; 4) Joel Ballibrino, "Kahilway," Star Records; 5) Regine Velasquez, "Fantasy," Universal Records; 6) Joel Ballibrino, "I'd Do Anything for Love," Star Records; 7) Freeway, "Acoustic Princess," Viva Music; 8) Willie Revillame, "Willing Willie," Viva Records; 9) Ivorian Artists, "Songs for A Better World," Ivory Music; 10) Basil Cyberpen, "Ryoko," Universal Records


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2) CATCH ME IN IN LOVE
3) JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
4) LIMITLESS
5) RANGO
6) RED RIDING HOOD
7) SUCKER PUNCH

**GREENBELT 2**

1) SUCKER PUNCH

**GREENBELT 3**

1) SUCKER PUNCH
2) JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
3) CATCH ME IN IN LOVE
4) WORLD INVASION BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
5) LIMITLESS

**ALABANG TOWN CENTRE**

1) CATCH ME IN IN LOVE
2) WORLD INVASION BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
3) JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
4) LIMITLESS
5) SUCKER PUNCH

**AYALA CENTER CEBU**

1) SUCKER PUNCH
2) WORLD INVASION BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
3) JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
4) CATCH ME IN LOVE

**MARQUEE**

1) SUCKER PUNCH
2) JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER(3D)
3) WORLD INVASION BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
4) CATCH ME IN LOVE

**MARKET! MARKET!**

1) JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
2) LIMITLESS
3) SUCKER PUNCH
4) TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5) TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6) CATCH ME IN LOVE
7) RESERVED

**TRINOMA**

1) RED RIDING HOOD
2) CATCH ME IN LOVE — SUCKER PUNCH
3) WORLD INVASION BATTLE: LOS ANGELES (3D)
4) JUSTIN BIEBER NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
5) LIMITLESS
6) SUCKER PUNCH
7) CATCH ME IN LOVE

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NEWPORT CINEMAS
1 BATTLE: LOS ANGELES 2:05, 4:45, 7:25, 10:05
2 SUCKER PUNCH 12:15, 2:35, 5:05, 7:35, 10:15
3 JUSTIN BIEBER: NEVER SAY NEVER 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30
4 CATCH ME I'M IN LOVE 1:45, 4:25, 7:25, 10:15

EASTWOOD CINEMAS

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 JUSTIN BIEBER: NEVER SAY NEVER (3D)
2 SUCKER PUNCH (3D)
3 CATCH ME, I'M IN LOVE
4 LIMITLESS
BATTLE: LOS ANGELES
SUMMER BLOCKBUSTER FASHION

POWER PLANT CINEMA
BATTLE: LOS ANGELES – PG13
CATCH ME I'M IN LOVE – 14A
LIMITLESS – 14A
SUCKER PUNCH (3D) – PG13
RED RIDING HOOD/SUCKER PUNCH – PG13/PG13
JUSTIN BIEBER: NEVER SAY NEVER (3D) – G

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# Duran Duran revisits early sound

**Duran Duran**
'All You Need Is Now'
3 Girls/Records

When producer Mark Ronson began working with Duran Duran on "All You Need Is Now," he reportedly challenged the '80s pop survivors to revisit the sound of their formative musical years and conjure up a follow-up to the band's 1982 hit-spawning album "Rio."

DURAN Duran's "All You Need Is Now" album recalls the sound of the British group's formative synth-pop years.

And on most of the new album's 14 tracks...that mostly does in the Rhine-only release in December...the music (with the British group's early sound is hard to miss.

On the funky "Girl Danger," the percussion recalls the group's classic "The Reflex," while on the moody ballad "Leave A Light On," the synths may bring to mind another '80s band, Depeche Mode. "Save A Prayer" pop music heavyweights Timbaland and Justin Timberlake.

By comparison, "All You Need Is Now" is less preoccupied with thinking up Duran Duran's sound is now threads than in showing off fine-old guy's that could maintain it: singer Le Bon, keyboardist Nick Rhodes, drummer Roger Taylor and bassist John Taylor pop superstars 30 years ago.

The album nevertheless with Duran Duran's sonic staples: Lush synths layered over driving, dance-floor ready bass lines, dance-inspired percussion, frequently accented with Le Bon's breathy and The high flying, moody vocals and harmonies.

"The Man Who Stole a Leopard" might be the album's standout one. Somewhat reminiscent of the band's dark and sexy classic "The Chauffeur," the track features vocals by Bello and LeBon—al his best. AP

**Chris Brown**
"F.A.M.E. (Forgetting All My Enemies)"
Jive/Cartel Group

Chris Brown's "Graffiti," which arrived on the music scene 10 months after his attack on Rihanna, landed with a thud. But a sincere public image wasn't his only business.

The 2000 album didn't do him any favors. Most of the songs were weak and simply not up to par with his past two albums, especially 2007's "Exclusive," a near-perfect CD.

Brown's back on track with "F.A.M.E. (Forgetting All My Enemies)," but artistically he's still not all the way there. The singer, who turns 22 in May, continues in advance when it comes to making Quiet Storm hits: "No Bull" is a certified R&B jam, and the Guiltiest summer "Yeah the Beat" is just as good.

Brown also can generate dance that aren't sexually charged. Singles sounds topnotch: "Deuces," a No. 1 R&B hit, was one of last year's best songs, and like it, "Turn Up Tone" is destined to hit the top spot.

But here's the problem: On the dance songs, Brown is just average.

"Turn Up The Love" follows the formula currently dominating pop radio: There's endless drum loops, sounds shooting and producing beats. It's a song any current pop singer could sing. The same goes for the Rihanna-fueled "Beautiful People."

Then there's "Say It With Me" and "Oh My Love," two songs that sound lost and boring.

So it begs the question: While Brown is a solid R&B singer, can he be a real pop star? After listening to "F.A.M.E.," the answer is unclear. "Should've Stayed You" and "We Ain't Us" are R&B tunes with pop flavors that are semi-attractive. Brown's voice sounds amazingly tuned on the first song and the second samples Michael Jackson's "Human Nature," so much work just traveled to make the song work. (He also sampled the Jackson song for their 1990s hit, "Right Here.")

Brown's had major crossover success in the past, his debut song "Run It!" rose to No. 1 on the pop charts, and he's had hits like "With You," "Kiss Kiss" and "Forever." Most of "F.A.M.E."—which is overloaded with 17 songs—is just as catchy as those songs. Even enlisting pop's foxy stars doesn't do the trick. "Shut It Out" with Justin Bieber is the disc's worst track.

"Up in This" has Brown boasting (Seen his mistakes in a past relationship and making sure he doesn't duplicate them in his current one. AP

OPENS MARCH 30 AT GLORIETTA, ROCKWELL AND TRINOMA
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